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ABSTRACT

What Americans know, or think they know, about financing a college education was studied in a comprehensive 9-month study that included 16 focus groups with 150 parents in 8 cities and a telephone survey of 2,000 randomly selected adults between the ages of 21 and 70 from all parts of the United States. Taken together, the central findings of this analysis suggest that the public places an incredibly high value on higher education and plans to do whatever it takes to help their children obtain it, or to obtain it themselves, but that they are worried, poorly informed, and not well equipped to make thoughtful choices. Six central conclusions are drawn: (1) the public thinks that higher education is vitally important and a good value for the money; (2) people worry about the price of attending college and thinks the price can be brought down without affecting academic quality; (3) the public has a distorted view of what it costs to attend college; (4) people have no idea why college costs increase; (5) the public does not know how much financial aid is available to help meet college bills, where it comes from, and how to get it; and (6) the public thinks that college leaders are indifferent to their concerns about the price of attending college. An appendix contains the survey findings in chart form. (SLD)

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Too Little Knowledge is a Dangerous Thing

What the Public Thinks and Knows About Paying for College

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AMERICAN COUNCIL
ON EDUCATION

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Preface

There is no dispute that college tuition has increased faster than the price of just about anything else in the last 20 years. But there is little agreement about much else regarding this complex and contentious issue. Journalists and policy makers criticize colleges for tuition hikes that, in their minds, are unreasonable and unjustifiable. College officials note that enrollments are at an all-time high, that an enormous amount of financial aid is available for low- and middle-income families, and that there are specific factors–many of which are outside their control–that drive up the price of college. Pity the poor parent who tries to understand what it all means and also plans to pay for it.

This report contains what we believe to be the first comprehensive look at what Americans know—or think they know—about financing a college education.

At least part of the problem centers on uncertainty about what the public really knows and thinks about the price of attending college. Personal stories and case studies–as valuable as they are–simply are no substitute for a comprehensive analysis of public knowledge and understanding. Without it, we are left with an endless series of charges and counter-charges. We hope this report, based on an analysis of research data collected with the generous support of the Lilly Endowment Inc. and the USA Group Foundation, will become the basis for a more constructive dialogue on the issues of college cost, price, and financial aid.

This report contains what we believe to be the first comprehensive look at what Americans know–or think they know–about financing a college education. The results should be of great concern to those who believe higher education to be in the national interest. While there are dozens of findings, some of which are contradictory, we think there are six central conclusions:

• The public believes that higher education is vitally important. And, despite the high price tag, the public thinks that it represents a "good value" for the money.

- The public worries a great deal about the price of attending college, believes it is too expensive, and thinks the price can be brought down without affecting academic quality.

- Despite their worries about the affordability of higher education in general, and their positive self-assessment of their personal ability to afford it, the public has a distorted view of what it costs to attend college.

- The public has no idea why college prices increase.

- The public does not know how much financial aid is available to help meet college bills, where it comes from, or how to get it.

- The public thinks that college leaders are indifferent to their concerns about the price of attending college.

The gap between the importance that the public places on getting a higher education and the knowledge that it has about how to afford it is staggering. The research firm that conducted the focus groups and survey concluded that it had never seen a knowledge gap of such size or magnitude.

The public's lack of understanding about such a vital concern can only be viewed as a failure by those of us who pride ourselves as teachers and educators. While Americans have a responsibility to learn as much as they can about the investment decisions they make, the fact is that we have not done an adequate job of helping them.

A word about terminology: "Cost" and "price" have very different meanings in the world of higher education finance–cost refers to the amount of money a college spends to educate each student, while price is the amount that each student ultimately is required to pay. However, our research has shown that these distinctions–as important as they are to the discussion within the higher education community–are lost on members of the public. Thus, when reviewing our research findings, we have been forced to use the terms interchangably in some sections of this document.

We hope this report deepens understanding of the issue and serves as the basis for a national effort to better educate the public about access and choice in higher education. We encourage all who read this report to consider ways to improve the public's knowledge about an issue that has such profound implications for our future as a nation. It would be a mistake, however, to view the challenge only as one of better informing the public. Progress must be made to contain college costs while improving educational quality. We especially ask that college and university presidents take this information to heart, act to moderate price increases, and re-double their efforts to educate the public about campus budgets and the financial aid that is available to students.

Introduction

The rapidly rising price of a college education has been an abiding concern of the public for a long time. In a 1968 article, entitled "The Higher Cost of Higher Education," the *New York Times Magazine* noted that:

> "parents by the hundreds of thousands, from all parts of the country and in all income brackets, are discovering each year the awesome facts of educational life.... [E]ach school year heralds an inexorable rise of 3 to 5 percent. Statistics such as these cause millions of parents whose incomes are adequate for most ordinary purposes to ask searching questions."[1]

Public attention to the rising price of college has... increased sharply in recent years.

Five years later, in April 1973, *U.S. News and World Report* headlined "Costs of Going to College Head for Record Highs" and noted that:

> "[W]ith another round of steep tuition hikes under way, college costs in this country are headed for new highs in the autumn. Among educators, there is apprehension that the newest financial squeeze will force many young people to reconsider their plans for college."[2]

While the magazine agonized over the rising prices, it applauded the efforts made by some college officials to hold the line.

Later in that same decade, President Jimmy Carter proposed a sharp expansion of federal student aid to help families cope with the rising price of going to college. Congress responded and approved the Middle Income Student Assistance Act in 1978. Ironically, in the 1970s, as public concern about higher education prices began to grow, college prices increased more slowly than the consumer price index.

Public attention to the rising price of college has, however, increased sharply in recent years. The subject has become regular fare for network news telecasts

Despite the generally high regard for American higher education, the public and its elected officials are far more frightened and skeptical about the "inexorable rise" in college tuition than in the past.

and personal financial magazines, and national magazines such as *Time* and *Newsweek* recently have run cover stories about the high price of paying for college.[3]

In 1997, Congress established the National Commission on the Cost of Higher Education to examine the extent of the increase and the reasons behind it, and to identify steps that Congress could take. The resulting report–while thoughtful and balanced–left no doubt: Colleges must moderate tuition increases or face action by federal policy makers.[4] At least one member of Congress has made a public call for federal price controls on college tuition. Other members have left no doubt that they are willing to consider the same thing.[5]

At the state level, several legislatures–such as California's and Virginia's–have responded to public anxiety by freezing tuition at public colleges and universities.[6] At least one state–Massachusetts–which hiked public-sector tuitions sharply in the 1980s, has cut them in the 1990s.

While the widespread attention to college affordability is not all that new, the tone of the public debate has changed considerably. A generation ago, analysis and public discussion were less hostile. Colleges that sought to moderate tuition increases were noted favorably, and there was widespread agreement that student aid was needed to help families pay college bills. More importantly, no one assumed that colleges were indifferent to cost and quality concerns.[7]

Today, the discussion is more negative and the explanations of college officials usually are given scant attention. Words such as "spiraling" and "gouging" are commonly used.[8] Past media portrayals of college officials as caring and concerned have been replaced by their depiction as weak leaders who are unwilling to make tough decisions.

Perhaps the most powerful change in the last 30 years, however, is the public's realization that college is the gateway to a better life. The public is aware that the working world has changed, that the economy is different, that employment options for lesser skilled workers are declining, and that the income gap between the educated and uneducated is growing. The link between a college education and access to the American middle-class has never been more obvious. The prospect of rising college prices, therefore, is all the more frightening.

Much of the public concern is focused on the price of attending the nation's most selective colleges, and those schools often have high price tags. Media stories about college prices often focus exclusively on the most expensive schools. Moderately priced institutions and campuses with lower rates of tuition increases have become all but invisible. Taken together, this creates a worrisome environment for college officials. In simplest terms, the dilemma is that despite the generally high regard for American higher education, the public and its elected officials are far more frightened and skeptical about the "inexorable rise" in college tuition than in the past.

While the public has internalized the fact that tuition is increasing–and it would be surprising if they had not internalized that point–it is not clear what the public really knows about the cost of going to college. Earlier research has shown that the public tends to overestimate the average price of a

college education and underestimates the amount of financial aid that is available to help pay the bills–a tendency that undoubtedly makes the prospect of paying for college seem like an insurmountable barrier to many families.

But beyond its lack of knowledge about college prices and financial aid, what does the public know, and, perhaps more important, what does it not know, about the price of going to college? The answer to the first question, it turns out, is very little. Based on a comprehensive nine month study beginning in fall 1997 of the public's knowledge and attitudes about financing higher education, which included 16 focus groups with 150 parents in eight cities and a telephone survey of 2,000 randomly selected adults between the ages of 21 and 70, from all regions of the country–we have concluded that the public knows far less about higher education than college officials ever imagined. Even parents with children in college, or whose children are about to go to college, are surprisingly uninformed.

(Note: The margin of error in the public opinion poll results is plus or minus two percent.)

Taken together, the central findings of this analysis suggest that the public places an incredibly high value on higher education and plans to do whatever it takes to help their children obtain it (or to get it for themselves), but that they are worried, poorly informed, and not well equipped to make thoughtful choices. College leaders not only have failed to educate the public about tuition prices and financial aid, they have failed to explain even the most basic elements of higher education financing and governance.

A single example illustrates the problem. At the first focus group we conducted, middle-income parents with children between the ages of 12 and 17 were asked if they could identify the "best" college diploma from among a stack that had been placed on the table. One participant quickly identified the MIT diploma, because, she said, "at MIT they teach you skills that will be useful in the job market, like auto repair." No one disagreed.

Subsequent focus groups revealed that most people do not understand the basic distinction between public and private colleges. Nor do they always understand the difference between two- and four-year colleges. "A two-year college," one participant said confidently, "is where you go to get four years of education in two years." A substantial majority of Americans believe that colleges are profit-making businesses.

Lacking even the most basic knowledge of university financing and control, it is no surprise that the public knows relatively little about the financing of a college education. The public continues to grossly overestimate the price of going to college, and most believe that it is unaffordable for a majority of families. Many admit they do not know where to get reliable information. Moreover, the public believes that colleges don't care what they charge, and thinks that prices can be reduced without affecting academic quality.

Perhaps the most troubling news was the finding that first-generation college families, minority group members, and those with low incomes are the most uninformed and fearful.

There is some good news for college leaders, however. The survey shows that the public places extraordi-

College leaders not only have failed to educate the public about tuition prices and financial aid, they have failed to explain even the most basic elements of higher education financing and governance.

narily high value on higher education, and, despite concern over the high price tag, believes that it is a "good value" relative to other purchases. People think that quality is generally high, and they are confident that they will be able to afford it for their own families.

Despite the positive news, it is hard to take comfort from the overall results. While the public admires and desires higher education, it greatly overestimates the price, has no idea why prices rise, fears college is unaffordable, believes institutions are indifferent to its worries, and does not know where to get good, reliable information to address its concerns.

Six Key Findings

1. The public believes that higher education is vitally important and, despite the high price tag, thinks it represents a "good value" for the money.

Americans are convinced that higher education is essential for economic success. Although some focus group participants acknowledge that they know someone who did well without going to college, almost all intuitively believe that success in today's economy depends on getting as much high-quality education as possible. All racial-ethnic groups and all income groups share this perspective.

[Focus group participants] intuitively believe that success in today's economy depends on getting as much high-quality education as possible.

The public values higher education for a single, specific reason: It will lead to a better job and the "good life." No other factor comes close. When the focus group moderator asked for other reasons for going to college, some of the participants cited personal development factors such as "maturity," "responsibility," and "to gain a sense of accomplishment." The participants, however, almost never volunteered the reasons most often cited by educators, such as becoming well read, learning to communicate effectively, becoming technologically literate, and being exposed to new ideas and different groups of people. When the focus group moderator mentioned these goals, the public readily accepted them. But these broader purposes and values of higher education are not widely shared without prompting.

A clear majority of Americans believe that college is so important that they will send their children regardless of price. Fifty-eight percent agreed that "a college education is so important that, regardless of how much it costs, I am going to make sure that my children go to college." At the same time, 32 percent agreed that "a college education is important, but if it costs too much, my family may have to reconsider whether we send our children to college." Only 3 percent said that "a college education is not that important and I doubt whether my children will go to college."

One troubling finding of the focus groups and the survey is that commitment to higher education varies by demographics. Those with high incomes and college experience (either they or a family member had attended college) were the most likely to express unqualified commitment for a college education regardless of the

FIGURE A

Americans Believe a College Education Is "Usually" Worth the Price
(compared with other goods and services)

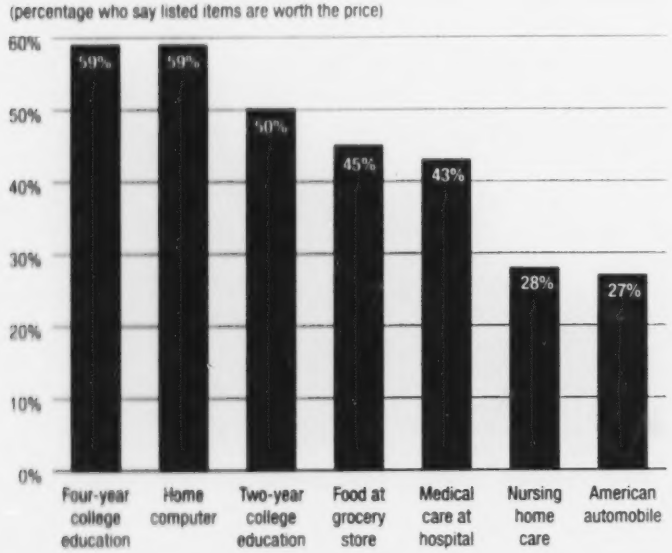
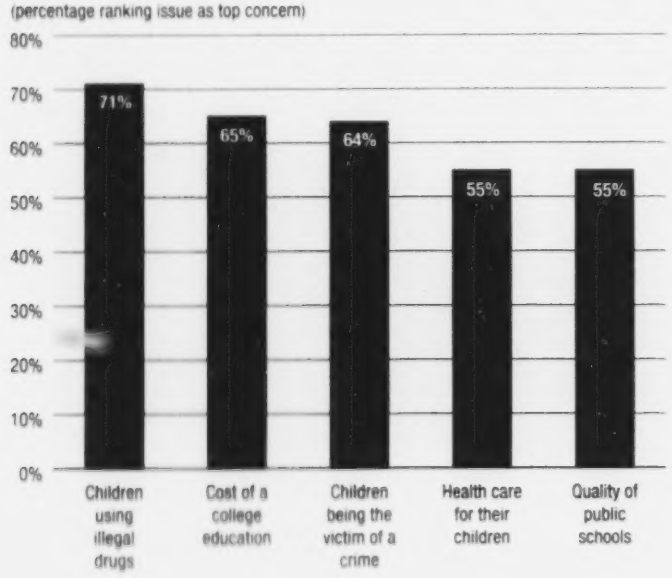


FIGURE B

The Cost of College Is Near the Top of Americans' List of Worries About Their Children



price. Respondents who had not been to college, members of minority groups, and individuals with low incomes were far more likely to believe that high prices could force a reconsideration of college plans.

Despite the overwhelming concern about the high price of college, the public–perhaps surprisingly–strongly believes that it is an investment that provides good value. Nearly sixty percent of the public believes that a college education is "usually" worth the price. When asked to rank "value for the money," a four-year college education finished ahead of food at the grocery store, medical care at a hospital, nursing home care, and an American automobile. Only a home computer is seen as an equally good value for the money. Two-year colleges also are viewed as a good value. *(See Figure A.)* Parents, and those who have had some college themselves, are more likely to believe that college is usually worth the price. For example, 69 percent of college graduates think that a four-year edu-cation is "usually" worth the price.

2. The public worries a great deal about the price of attending college, believes that college is too expensive, and thinks that prices can be brought down without affecting academic quality. The survey asked respondents if they worried more about their children using illegal drugs, being the victim of a crime, having adequate health care, paying for college, or the quality of their elementary and secondary schools. Paying for college was the second biggest concern, finishing behind the use of illegal drugs. Parents of children over the age of five are even

more inclined to worry about college prices than illegal drugs. According to the research, the same people are as worried about the price of college as they are about their children becoming victims of crime. *(See Figure B.)*

The public does not think college is affordable. A huge majority–71 percent of survey respondents–feel that "a four-year college education is not affordable for most Americans." Only 27 percent believe that college is affordable. African Americans (83 percent) and Hispanics (79 percent) are more likely to think that college is not affordable than whites. Still, more than two-thirds (70 percent) of the white respondents think that college is not affordable for all.

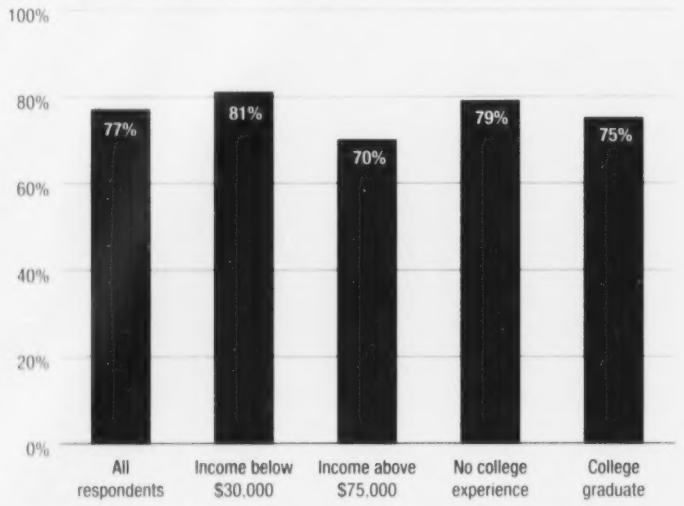
But there is a paradox in their views about college affordability. *At the same time that the public believes that college is not affordable for most people, they are extremely optimistic about their personal ability to afford it:* Eighty-five percent of the respondents said it is somewhat or very likely that they will be able to afford a four-year public education, and 70 percent thought it likely that they will be able to meet the price of a four-year private college. All income and education levels are optimistic: Seventy-eight percent of those with no college experience and 93 percent of college graduates think it likely that they will be able to send their children to college. Similarly, all ethnic groups think they can (or will be able to) afford it for their own children.

It is possible that the public's optimism regarding its own ability to afford higher education is a by-product of the strong national economy and the rising levels of confidence found in other public opinion surveys. Whether the public would be equally confident if the economy were growing at a slower rate is an open question.

FIGURE C

The Public Believes College Costs Can Be Slashed Without Reducing Quality

(percentage who believe cutting tuition would not lower quality)



The public believes that college prices can be slashed without affecting academic quality. Seventy-seven percent of the respondents agreed that colleges and universities can cut tuition without lowering academic quality. Only 16 percent said cutting tuition will affect quality. The perception that cuts can be made without sacrificing quality is widespread. Exposure to higher education has no impact on this issue: All groups tend to believe that colleges can cut tuition without diminishing quality. Among college graduates, for example, 75 percent think that colleges can offer a less expensive, but equally high-quality product. If the public does not intuitively understand the relationship between the prices they pay and the quality of the education they receive, college officials obviously will find it much harder to

explain and defend increased charges. *(See Figure C.)*

This tendency to believe that college prices can be brought down without affecting academic quality may be related, as we discuss later in the report, to the public's general lack of understanding about what tuition pays for and what causes it to increase. Even so, the public's view on this is not totally surprising. The public almost always believes that the cost of goods and services in *any* industry can be reduced without affecting quality. In a follow-up survey, we asked if the cost of specific goods and services–medical care, American automobiles, a college education, American clothing, and the U.S. armed forces–could be reduced without lowering the quality of the underlying product or service. In every case, an overwhelming majority of the public felt that prices could be cut without harming quality. So the problems faced by higher education are in no way unique.

Still, the gap in public understanding about price and quality in other areas of the economy should not provide much comfort. Indeed, it shows how great a challenge we face in attempting to convince the public that the price of college is related to the quality of the product.

3. The public believes they know a great deal about paying for college, but they do not discuss the subject often and have a very distorted view of what it actually costs to attend. Most survey respondents think they know a lot about paying for college. For example, 56 percent of the respondents think they know "a lot or a good amount" about what it costs to attend higher education. A smaller but still sizable percentage (40 percent) think they know "a lot or a good amount" about where and how to get financial aid for college. Not surprisingly, parents with children in college are most likely to think that they are well informed on both points.

But while the public claims to be fairly knowledgeable about paying for college, they do not think about it very often. Forty-seven percent say that they rarely think about college costs and 16 percent concede that they never do. Roughly one-third (30 percent) say that they think about the financing of higher education "one or two times a week." Parents with children in college are only somewhat more likely to think about what it costs to go to college.

To help put this in context, we asked the public in a separate follow-up survey if they talk about "the cost of a college education for your children" more or less frequently than "the issue of violent crime," "politics in Washington," "the issue of drugs," or "the cost of medical care." The cost of college is their least frequent topic of discussion. Only 4 percent of the public talk about paying for college daily, compared with 31 percent for politics, 33 percent for violent crime, 20 percent for drugs, and 13 percent for medical care.

The lack of attention to college is clearly related to the low level of public knowledge. This survey shows, once again, that the public badly overestimates the price of a college education. Unlike previous surveys, however, this one asked respondents to estimate both the price of tuition alone and the price "if you include all other costs associated with college, for example, room and board, books, and other college fees." In both cases, the estimates

given were far higher than the actual averages. *(See Table 1.)*

It should concern college leaders that the public overestimates the average price of tuition at four-year public colleges by 212 percent and misjudges the total cost of attendance by 99 percent. At four-year private colleges, the public comes closer in percentage terms–the overestimates are "only" 31 percent for tuition alone and 40 percent for total costs. Still, it is hard to think that the public really understands private college prices when the average guess is off by $4,200 for tuition and by $8,200 for the total costs.

Perhaps most troubling is the fact that tuition and fee levels at community colleges, the least expensive and most affordable type of college, were so distorted in the public's mind. For public community colleges, respondents overestimated tuition and fee levels by 180 percent.

Parents with children under age 12 are the most likely to admit that they do not have a good handle on what it costs to go to college. They're right; these individuals are the most likely to overestimate both tuition and the total cost of attendance. (Ironically, they also are the least likely to worry about their ability to afford college for their children. Apparently, in this case, distance breeds ignorance and, at the same time, personal confidence.)

Parents with children in college believe that they have the best knowledge about college prices. Indeed, their estimates fall closer to the actual price than any other subgroup, but they still miss by a wide margin. For example, parents of college students overestimate tuition and fees at four-year public colleges and universities by $5,500.

TABLE 1

Americans Overestimate the Price of College

Type of Institution	Estimated Tuition Only	Actual Tuition Only	Estimated Total Cost	Actual Total Cost
Two-year public (in-state)	$4,206	$1,501	$9,054	$3,089
Four-year public (in-state)	$9,694	$3,111	$17,259	$8,679
Four-year private	$17,897	$13,664	$28,532	$20,378

Source for actual costs: The College Board, 1997-98 Annual Survey of Colleges.

The ACE focus group findings reinforce this evidence. Moderators asked participants if they felt they knew more about how to buy, and what it would cost, to purchase a house, a car, or a college education. Despite the fact that all of the focus group participants were parents–many of whom had children in college–they consistently admitted feeling least comfortable with their knowledge about paying for college.

4. The public has no idea why the price of college goes up.

When asked an open-ended question about why college prices increase, 26 percent of respondents did not attempt an answer. Even parents who have children in college admitted that they are clueless about the reasons why colleges raise their tuition. *(See Table 2 on page 10.)*

Among those who ventured an opinion, the largest number (30 percent) placed the blame on the shoulders of "high-priced faculties and professors." Surprisingly, college graduates and those with children in college are *more* likely than the general public to think that faculty are to blame for the

TABLE 2

Americans Don't Understand What Drives Tuition Increases

	All Respondents	College Graduates	No College Experience
Don't know	26%	19%	36%
"High-priced" faculty	30%	34%	28%
Colleges have a monopoly	14%	17%	11%
Technology	4%	7%	4%
"High-salaried" administrators	6%	6%	7%
Maintenance and upkeep	4%	5%	4%

high price of college. Minorities were somewhat less likely than the general public to think that faculty members drive college tuition increases.

Several other answers were given with some regularity. The second most common response by those who ventured an opinion–"colleges know they have a monopoly"–was suggested by 14 percent.

The focus groups showed somewhat different results. Participants were *more* likely to point to "administrators" and somewhat less likely to cite faculty. Participants also were more likely to volunteer that college athletic programs were a key factor. That issue did not come up in the survey.

Of particular interest are the things that the public did not mention in the survey. College leaders–ourselves included–consistently point to several factors that push up college prices: the exponential growth of scientific knowledge, the costs of keeping up with technology, state budget cuts, the growth of institutional student aid, and the cost of complying with government regulations. Yet the public did not mention *any* of these issues, save "technology," which was cited by just 4 percent. In the focus groups, the public recognized–when prompted by the moderator–that these factors play a role. But the public does not think of them without encouragement.

5. The public does not know how much financial aid is available to help pay college bills, where it comes from, or how to get it. Perhaps the most interesting insights in this area emerged from the focus groups. When people were asked where they got information about student aid and other ways to pay for college, the most frequent answer was "high school guidance counselors." When asked who made financial aid available for college, the first answer usually was "businesses" or "corporations," followed by "the colleges themselves." Eventually, a participant would suggest "government." When the respondent asked "federal or state government?," the usual answer was "both."

Focus group moderators asked participants to estimate how much financial aid was available for students, and the most common answer was "several billion dollars." The actual answer, roughly $50 billion a year including student loans, amazed the participants. Indeed, this number seemed so far outside reality that many participants were unwilling to believe it. One parent asked where she could "get in line." Equally surprising to focus group participants was the fact that the federal government alone makes $40 billion available every year.

Many focus group participants were reluctant to see federal student loans as

a form of financial aid. Even when they were told that the loans carried a subsidized interest rate that lowered costs to borrowers sharply, some still refused to see this as aid because it comes with a string attached–it has to be repaid. Federal work-study, however, also comes with a string–students must work to receive the assistance–but participants were quite willing to see work-study assistance as financial aid.

The survey tried to examine public knowledge about the amount of student aid available through a true-false question: Is it true or false that there is $40 billion available from the federal government to help students and families pay for college? Forty-three percent thought the statment was true; 38 percent said it was false. A full 20 percent admitted they had no idea.

The survey also asked if the public believed that college financial aid included loans or if it simply meant grants and scholarships. Sixty-two percent of the public agreed that grants and scholarships are student aid, implying that the remainder–38 percent–were willing to count loans as financial assistance. Despite this, a large majority (84 percent) thought that student loans are a practical way to pay for college–just slightly less than the 88 percent who thought that federal work-study programs are a practical way to finance an education.

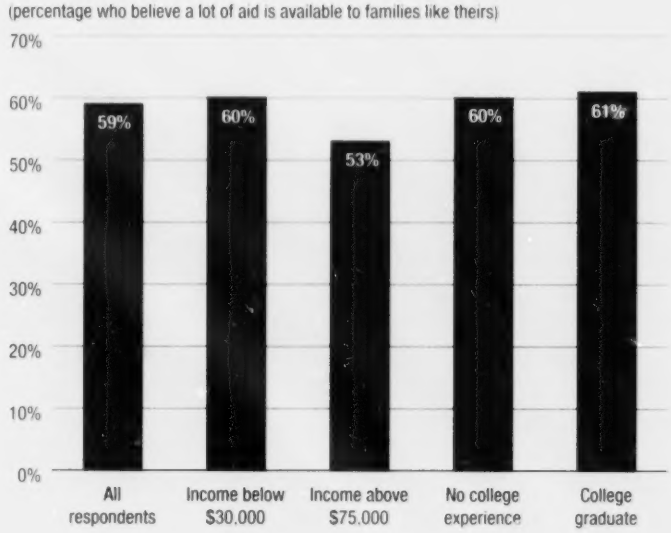
The public seems to be of two minds about whether there is enough financial aid available. For example, respondents agreed (68 percent) that "there is not enough financial aid available for all the qualified students who deserve the chance to get a college education" (45 percent of respondents expressed "strong" agreement with this statement). However, when read a variety of statements about the amount of financial aid that is available, respondents again viewed their personal situation more favorably: Fifty-nine percent think that "a lot of student aid is available to help families like mine afford a college education," and 65 percent acknowledge that colleges make a lot of financial aid available. There is other positive news as well: Fifty percent agree that state governments make a lot of aid available and 71 percent believe that the federal government makes a lot of financial aid available. *(See Figure D.)*

6. The public thinks that college leaders are indifferent to their concerns about the cost of attending college.

The reasoning is as follows: "Colleges know that their product is essential and

FIGURE D

The Public Is Confident that Student Aid Is Available to Help Families Like Theirs



that we have to buy it if we want our children to succeed. Therefore, they can charge whatever they want." Some–especially low-income and minority parents–believe that high prices and the seeming absence of information about student aid are part of a deliberate effort to prevent their children from going to college.

Focus group participants were quite willing to view cover stories by *Time* and *Newsweek* on the high cost of college as "believable." Indeed, they were so convinced that they were reluctant to accept information that suggested a different picture. For example, when asked if the average student at a four-year college pays less than $4,000 a year in tuition, 60 percent of the survey respondents said "no." While African Americans and Hispanics were somewhat more likely to agree with this statement, no subgroup was willing to accept it. Even 59 percent of those with children in college rejected it. In the focus groups, the moderator's assertion that average tuition for most students was less than $4,000 was met with disbelief.

Two survey questions sought to determine whether the public thinks that colleges try to keep their tuition affordable. In one case, the survey asked: "Do you think most colleges try to keep the amount they charge at an affordable level for families like yours or not?" Only 37 percent said yes; 55 percent said no. A slightly different question asked: "Do you think most colleges charge a fair price for a college education or not?" Just 34 percent said yes, while 57 said no. Nor do different groups vary significantly on this issue. College graduates are the most likely to believe that colleges try to keep prices affordable, and are somewhat more likely to think that most colleges charge a fair price. Nonetheless, a majority of college graduates think colleges could do more in both areas.

Exacerbating the perception that colleges are not focused on this issue is the fact that 80 percent of Americans think that colleges and universities make a profit. While the belief that colleges make a profit declines with increasing education attainment levels and income, more than 72 percent of college graduates think it is true.

Most colleges try to help families afford college by charging a price that is lower than the actual cost of providing the education, and by offering institutional financial aid to many families. Focus group participants were asked whether they understood the difference between the common terms "cost," "price," "subsidy," and "discounting." Sadly, they had no idea what these terms mean. When the concepts were carefully explained, they were indifferent. The only thing that matters to them, they repeatedly told the moderator, is the bottom line: "How much do I have to pay?" In short, the effort college officials make to distinguish between price and cost, and between posted price and net price, does not matter to the public–it is the academic equivalent of an "inside the beltway" discussion.

The fact is that, as the Cost Commission noted, higher education is not "fiscally transparent."[9] We do not make it easy for customers or other outsiders to understand our prices or how they can pay for an education. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that the public believes that colleges are indifferent to their fears about something they regard as essential.

What Does It All Mean?

Does it matter? Should college and university officials be concerned about the public's lack of knowledge and anxiety about these issues? After all, more students keep coming to our institutions every year and Americans are–despite everything–very confident about their personal ability to afford higher education. Why be concerned?

We believe that it matters a great deal and that there are specific reasons why college and university officials at all levels should be more focused on this issue.

The perception that college leaders are indifferent can have a terribly corrosive impact on public perception of higher education over the long term.

• **Regardless of how they regard their personal ability to afford higher education for themselves or their children, it is clear that many people feel a deep anxiety about paying for college.**
It is this generalized concern that is being transmitted to (and interpreted by) the media and politicians, and that leads to serious public relations problems. Until the public and elected officials have a better understanding about college costs and pricing, the availability of financial aid, and the steps that are being taken to restrain the growth of college tuition, the media criticism and political attention probably will continue.

The perception that college leaders are indifferent can have a terribly corrosive impact on public perception of higher education over the long term. Appearing indifferent to public concern is dangerous for any industry. This is especially true for an enterprise considered so vital to the nation's future and so dependent on the public trust.

The fact is that college and university leaders are deeply concerned about access to higher education in general, and affordability in particular. A recent survey of ACE member presidents asked them to prioritize issues. In response to this question, a solid majority (66 percent) chose "college costs" as a high priority. What must be done, in part, is to make certain that the public and their elected officials are aware that college officials are focused on this issue and are taking serious and substantial steps to deal with it.

• **The public's knowledge and attitudes matter a great deal because the absence of good and accurate information cannot help but lead individuals to make poor choices.** Those who greatly overestimate the price of college, or who seriously underestimate the amount of financial aid available, may fail to consider opportunities that are available to them, and from which they would benefit considerably. When this happens, the nation, the institutions, and the individuals all lose.

• **The public's lack of knowledge on these matters presents a serious moral issue.**
On virtually every question or issue, whether in the focus groups or through the survey, low-income individuals, minorities, and those with modest levels of education demonstrated the least knowledge and were the most uninformed about the cost of higher education and the availability of financial aid. They are the most likely to think that they cannot afford college. They worry about the price of college more often. They are the most likely to think that college officials are indifferent to their fears.

Higher education is the nation's best hope for long-term economic growth and social progress. In late 20th century America, higher education has become the primary gateway to economic security. For individuals, it is widely regarded as an indispensible passport to a better life. If large numbers of citizens feel that this passport is inaccessible, anxiety, bitterness, and anger are likely to follow.

Opening the doors of higher education to all Americans, regardless of their economic status, has been a central goal of colleges and policy makers for three decades. While we have clearly made significant progress, the results of this effort suggest that we must pay far greater attention to better educating the public about the opportunities that are available and our commitment to helping all Americans gain access to those opportunities.

Some Additional Observations

The public's lack of knowledge creates anxiety; people probably would not be as worried about paying for college if they were better informed. The reality of affording college, challenging as it is, is less frightening than the current inflated misinformation. During the course of the focus groups, for example, the mindset of participants clearly changed as they learned more about the actual prices and the amount of financial aid that is available.

During the course of the focus groups, for example, the mindset of participants clearly changed as they learned more about the actual prices and the amount of financial aid that is available.

This shift was also evident in survey responses. When we asked parents what they thought would be the most important factors for their children in selecting a college, 28 percent said tuition. But when we asked parents whose children were already in college what factor had been most important in actually choosing a college, tuition fell to 17 percent. Those who were in college themselves (adult learners) cited location (28 percent) and academic programs (22 percent). Tuition (18 percent) was the third most important consideration. It is notable that those who have been through the process are more likely to suggest that price was a less significant factor in the decision making than parents who have not yet been through the process assume it will be.

Another survey question asked about what factual information might make respondents feel better about paying for college. Several educational statements worked. For example, knowing that every college has trained financial aid counselors, that more than $40 billion in student aid is available from the federal government, and that the average student at a four-year institution pays less than $4,000 all made the public feel better about the prospect of paying for college. Unfortunately, the survey also revealed that a majority of the public does not believe that the last two items (the amount of aid available and the actual average cost of college attendance) are factually accurate.

Because the public believes that postsecondary education is essential, it is quite possible that they resent having to pay for it–or at least resent paying what is charged. In a sense, it's a little like any other purchase that is absolutely necessary–the public is predisposed to think that it costs more than it should, regardless of what they pay for it.

What Colleges Must Do

The most important conclusions we draw from these data are that higher education has not done a good job of educating the public about either the cost of attending college or the availability of student aid, and has not demonstrated that we care about keeping college affordable. Dealing with both of these issues will present a variety of challenges in the years ahead. We believe that educators must address these concerns in a clear, forthright fashion if our enterprise is to maintain the public confidence and support that it has so long enjoyed.

Getting more and better information about higher education into the hands of students and parents is a vitally important task.

Getting more and better information about higher education into the hands of students and parents is a vitally important task. Financial aid professionals have long recognized that accurate, understandable information about college prices and the availability of financial aid is crucial if students and families–especially those with low and moderate incomes–are to see higher education as a possible opportunity. Such information must reach families early–when students are graduating from high school is too late to make a significant difference in their personal planning and academic performance.

There have been a great number of information campaigns to educate students and families, and sources are available for those that wish to take advantage of them. "Surfing" the Internet, for example, quickly reveals some 350 web sites devoted to "financing higher education." "College fairs" are a staple of any high school in the land. The U.S. Department of Education publishes boxcars full of information for families, much of it of high quality. And, as a visit to any bookstore will quickly reveal, commercial publishers see those interested in college affordability as a promising market.

These are important and useful resources, but it is apparent that the available information is not reaching the intended audience or that it is not reaching people early enough to facilitate planning and alleviate fears. As a community, we have yet to make information available in a way that helps the public think about these issues in time to affect student performance and academic planning.

At the same time, it is apparent that properly conducted information campaigns can make a difference. The focus groups reveal that advertising about higher education financing can penetrate the public's awareness. In Georgia, for example, the public is well aware of the state's HOPE scholarship plan. Under this plan, high school students who stay off drugs and achieve a "B" average can attend any public college in Georgia without paying tuition. This message has penetrated in large part because the state has made extensive efforts to make students and the public aware of the basic terms of the program. Georgia citizens may not understand the nuances of the program, but they understand the basics in a way that enables them to see the opportunity and the implications for their lives and their children very clearly.

The news media have contributed to the public's lack of knowledge about paying for college–stories invariably focus attention on a very small number of exceptionally expensive institutions. Such an approach is tantamount to describing the auto industry by writing stories only about the Mercedes, Jaguar, and Lexus. The stories may not be inaccurate, but they provide a distorted picture of what it takes to buy a car.

But colleges and universities must accept that the news media will not cover this issue in a balanced fashion that accurately describes the prices average families face. As Jerry Footlick notes in a study conducted for ACE, reporters and editors always look for a "Holy Cow!" story–and average-priced schools do not meet that test.

While the news media can and should be criticized for their slant on these stories, college leaders must do a better job of informing the media and educating parents, students, and the public.

The public as a whole, and particularly those individuals with children approaching college age, are eager for more information about higher education. The focus group discussions were lively and animated. Moderators often had to cut off discussion prematurely to move on to other topics. Participants wanted to use the sessions to learn something about a topic that was of great interest to them. Some of the focus group participants volunteered that they felt better about higher education because of what they had learned in the sessions–an unanticipated result that underscores the need for better efforts to educate and inform the public.

In our follow-up survey, we asked about the "trust" the public has in college and university leaders, members of Congress, doctors, elementary and secondary school educators, members of the clergy, and journalists. Asked in this way, college and university leaders do not fare well: Elementary and secondary school educators come out on top, with 64 percent of the public indicating that they trust them "just about all the time" or "most of the time"; the clergy and doctors are second, with each having 60 percent; college and university leaders, viewed as more distant and less accessible, are in the second tier, with 39 percent. The public has almost no trust in journalists (16 percent) or "most members of Congress" (9 percent). *(See Figure E.)*

While college and university leaders can take some comfort in the fact that 40 percent of the public trusts them at least most of the time, it is

not the level of trust we would seek, and it is hardly the image that we have of ourselves.

Indeed, our findings are more critical than the results of the ongoing Harris Confidence Poll. This annual survey asks Americans to indicate their level of confidence in the nation's leading social institutions. For most of the last decade, the military has topped this list (44 percent of those surveyed in 1998 expressed a great deal of confidence in the military). Medicine (38 percent), colleges and universities (37 percent), and the U.S. Supreme Court (37 percent) are virtually tied for second place. Law firms (11 percent), organized labor (13 percent), Congress (12 percent), and the press (14 percent) are at the bottom of the list. *(See Figure F.)*

Informing the public in order to close the knowledge gap will be an enormous undertaking. Nonetheless, it can—and must—be done. We have a positive story to tell: "College costs less than you fear it does, aid is available, there are choices. Plan now, and we will help." And yet, colleges are not accustomed to seeing themselves as having a problem with communicating with the public. But higher education does in fact have such a problem, and we must address it to retain the public's trust and confidence.

It would be a huge mistake, however, to view the challenge only as one of better informing the public and correcting inaccurate information. Progress in containing college costs is just as important as improving educational quality. Many colleges and universities *have* taken significant steps to contain and reduce costs. But, much of the public is completely unaware of the steps that colleges have taken to

FIGURE E

The Public Is Less Likely to Trust College and University Leaders "All" or "Most of the Time" than Many Other Professionals

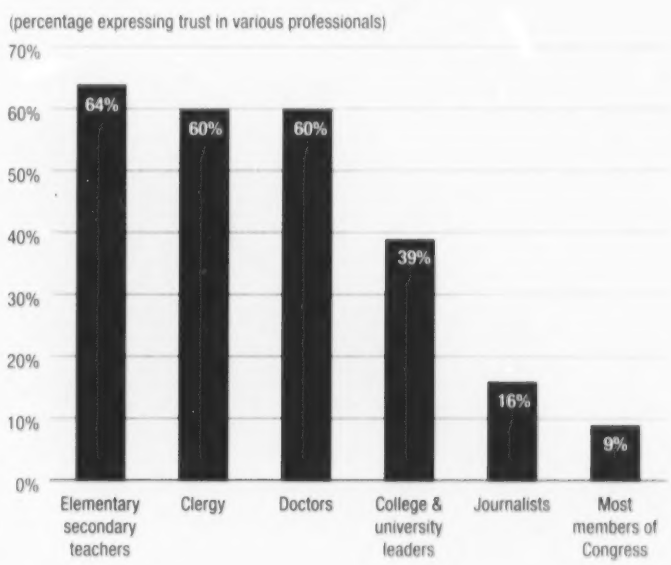
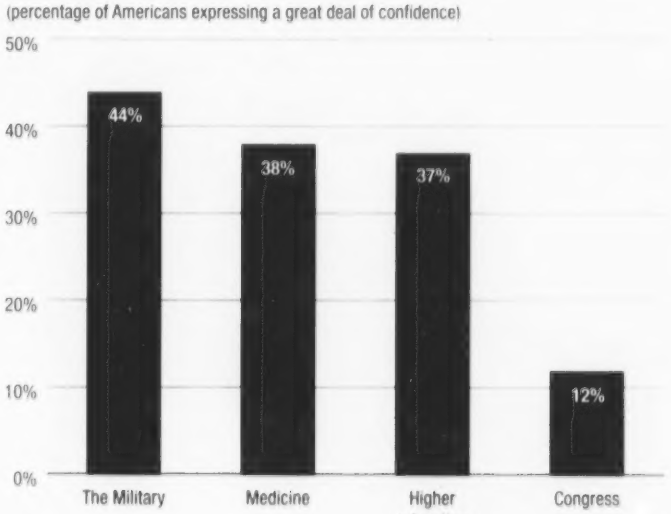


FIGURE F

Americans' Level of Confidence in Nation's Social Institutions



Source: The Harris Poll

increase access and minimize tuition increases. Over the last five years, for example, the rate of increase in tuition has declined steadily. Inflation too has declined and, as a result, cost containment efforts have been more productive.

Making hard choices and calling attention to them can be a double-edged sword–especially if, as is often the case, the changes that are made result in personnel reductions. In the focus groups, we asked if the public would be more or less likely to send their children to a major university if they knew that the school, in an effort to minimize the need for tuition increases, had reduced personnel by 500 people. The participants were of two minds: Some felt that this was a mark of an institution that was serious about remaining affordable. Others worried that staff reductions, especially cuts among faculty members, might mean the institution was facing financial problems. And, in fact, both assumptions may be accurate. Still, unlike the international corporation that sees its stock prices increase when it announces budget cuts and personnel reductions, a college that does the same thing may see public confidence plummet.

The challenge for higher education in the years ahead is two-fold. Colleges and universities must step up efforts to manage college costs while enhancing academic quality, and we must make a sustained effort to educate the public and close the information gap. Both will be difficult. But if we are to sustain the public's confidence and support, and if we are to keep open the doors of opportunity regardless of income or family circumstances, we have no alternative.

Endnotes

[1] Myron Brenton. "The Higher Cost of Higher Education." *New York Times Magazine* (April 21, 1968): 32.

[2] "Costs of Going to College Head for Record Highs," *U.S. News and World Report* 74 (April 9, 1973): 45.

[3] "How Colleges are Gouging U," *Time* (March 17, 1997) and "$1,000 a Week: The Scary Cost of College," *Newsweek* (April 29, 1996).

[4] Straight Talk about College Costs and Prices: The Report of the National Commission on the Cost of Higher Education (Phoenix, Oryx: 1998).

[5] See especially discussion of Cost Commission in *Congressional Record* - House (May 13, 1997), H2543-45.

[6] California imposed tuition freeze in 1995, Oregon in 1996, Utah and New Mexico saw some institutions imposing freezes in 1996 and 1997.

[7] Quoted in www.espn.sportzone.com/nfl/news980318 (March 18, 1998).

[8] See *Time*, op.cit.

[9] Straight Talk about College Costs and Prices: The Report of the National Commission on the Cost of Higher Education (Phoenix, Oryx: 1998).

Appendix: Survey Findings

ACE SURVEY FINDINGS	REGION				CHILDREN UNDER 18				CHILDREN IN COLLEGE	

Do you have any children under the age of 18? What are the ages of your children?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
NO CHILDREN UNDER 18	56%	62%	54%	54%	57%	–	–	–	–	57%	56%
NEWBORN TO 5 YEARS OLD	18%	18%	16%	17%	19%	–	–	–	–	5%	19%
6 TO 11 YEARS OLD	15%	12%	17%	17%	12%	–	–	–	–	10%	15%
12 TO 17 YEARS OLD	11%	9%	12%	11%	13%	–	–	–	–	28%	10%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	–	–	–	–	**100%**	**100%**

Is your child/are your children planning on attending college or do you plan on sending them?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
YES	90%	90%	86%	91%	91%	–	91%	91%	86%	89%	90%
NO	6%	6%	7%	5%	5%	–	4%	4%	10%	7%	6%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	5%	4%	7%	4%	4%	–	5%	5%	4%	4%	5%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	–	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Do you currently have any children that are enrolled in college pursuing an undergraduate degree?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
YES	9%	10%	9%	9%	9%	10%	3%	6%	24%	–	–
NO	91%	90%	90%	91%	91%	91%	97%	93%	77%	–	–
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	–	–
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	–	–

Are you yourself currently enrolled in college pursuing an undergraduate degree?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
YES	11%	10%	8%	12%	12%	12%	14%	6%	8%	10%	11%
NO	89%	90%	92%	88%	88%	88%	86%	94%	92%	90%	89%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

The cost of a college education—does this worry you a lot, a little, or not at all?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
A LOT	65%	68%	64%	65%	64%	65%	64%	70%	66%	66%	65%
A LITTLE	25%	24%	27%	25%	26%	24%	30%	23%	25%	21%	26%
NOT AT ALL	9%	7%	9%	9%	10%	10%	6%	6%	9%	12%	8%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Your child becoming the victim of crime—does this worry you a lot, a little, or not at all?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
A LOT	64%	61%	62%	68%	62%	68%	58%	66%	54%	55%	65%
A LITTLE	28%	31%	27%	25%	29%	25%	32%	27%	36%	33%	27%
NOT AT ALL	8%	8%	10%	7%	9%	7%	9%	7%	10%	11%	8%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
54%	56%	59%	0%	53%	55%	54%	59%	45%	44%	58%
17%	19%	16%	17%	19%	15%	16%	15%	21%	33%	20%
18%	14%	13%	14%	17%	17%	15%	14%	22%	14%	14%
10%	11%	12%	9%	12%	13%	15%	11%	13%	10%	8%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
81%	92%	95%	83%	92%	93%	94%	89%	91%	88%	93%
8%	6%	3%	9%	5%	5%	3%	5%	8%	7%	5%
11%	2%	2%	8%	4%	3%	2%	6%	1%	6%	2%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
7%	11%	10%	8%	7%	14%	15%	9%	14%	7%	7%
93%	89%	90%	92%	93%	87%	85%	91%	87%	93%	93%
0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
3%	19%	9%	16%	8%	11%	7%	9%	15%	15%	24%
97%	81%	91%	84%	92%	89%	93%	91%	85%	86%	77%
0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
64%	68%	64%	68%	67%	67%	57%	65%	64%	71%	60%
23%	24%	28%	23%	26%	25%	31%	26%	23%	18%	32%
11%	8%	7%	9%	7%	8%	11%	8%	10%	10%	8%
1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	3%	1%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
69%	68%	56%	70%	64%	60%	54%	61%	79%	71%	67%
21%	23%	37%	22%	28%	33%	34%	31%	16%	18%	18%
9%	9%	7%	8%	8%	7%	11%	8%	6%	11%	13%
0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	3%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Your child using illegal drugs—does this worry you a lot, a little, or not at all?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
A LOT	71%	74%	74%	71%	65%	76%	69%	65%	58%	61%	72%
A LITTLE	14%	12%	13%	12%	20%	11%	20%	16%	17%	15%	14%
NOT AT ALL	14%	12%	12%	17%	15%	12%	10%	18%	25%	24%	14%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Affording adequate health care for your child—does this worry you a lot, a little, or not at all?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
A LOT	55%	53%	57%	59%	49%	62%	47%	51%	39%	53%	55%
A LITTLE	27%	31%	23%	25%	29%	23%	36%	28%	32%	22%	27%
NOT AT ALL	18%	16%	20%	16%	22%	15%	17%	21%	29%	24%	17%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

The quality of public elementary and secondary schools in your area—does this worry you a lot, a little, or not at all?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
A LOT	55%	52%	52%	58%	55%	57%	50%	58%	46%	40%	56%
A LITTLE	26%	23%	28%	25%	28%	25%	30%	24%	30%	40%	25%
NOT AT ALL	17%	22%	19%	15%	16%	16%	19%	18%	22%	18%	17%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%	3%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Would you say a four-year college education for your children/yourself is usually worth its price, sometimes worth its price, rarely worth its price, or never worth its price?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
USUALLY	59%	58%	59%	60%	60%	61%	58%	56%	57%	65%	59%
SOMETIMES	27%	29%	29%	27%	26%	26%	31%	31%	27%	27%	27%
RARELY	6%	5%	6%	6%	7%	7%	4%	4%	6%	3%	6%
NEVER	4%	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%	2%	5%	4%	3%	4%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	4%	5%	4%	3%	4%	3%	5%	4%	7%	3%	4%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Would you say an American automobile is usually worth its price, sometimes worth its price, rarely worth its price, or never worth its price?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
USUALLY	27%	27%	27%	25%	29%	30%	22%	23%	24%	30%	27%
SOMETIMES	40%	42%	38%	39%	39%	39%	40%	41%	38%	39%	40%
RARELY	18%	17%	22%	18%	16%	16%	19%	22%	27%	18%	18%
NEVER	14%	12%	12%	17%	12%	13%	18%	12%	9%	10%	14%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	2%	2%	1%	0%	4%	2%	1%	2%	2%	4%	2%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

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Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
72%	75%	66%	70%	73%	71%	65%	71%	70%	76%	66%
8%	13%	20%	12%	14%	15%	21%	15%	9%	8%	20%
20%	11%	14%	17%	12%	13%	14%	14%	22%	14%	14%
1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	3%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
61%	57%	49%	65%	55%	52%	41%	53%	64%	60%	62%
23%	26%	30%	23%	28%	26%	31%	26%	26%	29%	26%
16%	17%	20%	11%	17%	20%	29%	20%	10%	11%	10%
0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	3%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
50%	58%	56%	57%	56%	55%	56%	52%	68%	61%	58%
25%	27%	26%	25%	31%	26%	19%	28%	16%	25%	22%
22%	14%	16%	16%	12%	17%	24%	18%	14%	14%	18%
3%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	0%	2%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
51%	56%	69%	56%	56%	64%	69%	60%	54%	62%	57%
30%	29%	24%	28%	32%	24%	22%	28%	26%	25%	27%
7%	8%	4%	8%	5%	5%	5%	6%	7%	4%	8%
6%	3%	2%	5%	3%	4%	1%	3%	10%	5%	6%
7%	4%	2%	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	2%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
29%	23%	29%	27%	24%	27%	32%	27%	16%	26%	40%
33%	38%	46%	38%	43%	42%	40%	39%	45%	42%	30%
20%	20%	15%	17%	20%	17%	15%	19%	18%	19%	3%
17%	17%	9%	15%	13%	13%	10%	13%	20%	12%	20%
2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	3%	2%	1%	1%	8%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

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Would you say a home computer is usually worth its price, sometimes worth its price, rarely worth its price, or never worth its price?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
USUALLY	59%	57%	58%	55%	69%	57%	57%	64%	66%	62%	59%
SOMETIMES	24%	25%	22%	27%	22%	24%	29%	22%	20%	21%	24%
RARELY	6%	8%	6%	7%	4%	7%	4%	5%	8%	7%	6%
NEVER	5%	5%	7%	5%	2%	6%	3%	4%	4%	6%	4%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	6%	6%	7%	7%	4%	7%	6%	6%	3%	5%	6%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Would you say food at the grocery store is usually worth its price, sometimes worth its price, rarely worth its price, or never worth its price?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
USUALLY	45%	46%	47%	38%	52%	47%	45%	39%	41%	47%	45%
SOMETIMES	43%	38%	43%	50%	37%	41%	46%	50%	39%	42%	43%
RARELY	9%	12%	7%	8%	8%	8%	7%	8%	15%	7%	9%
NEVER	3%	3%	3%	3%	1%	3%	2%	2%	5%	1%	3%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	3%	0%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Would you say medical care at a hospital in your area is usually worth its price, sometimes worth its price, rarely worth its price, or never worth its price?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
USUALLY	43%	45%	45%	42%	42%	46%	37%	37%	47%	36%	44%
SOMETIMES	28%	31%	30%	26%	28%	26%	32%	34%	30%	36%	28%
RARELY	16%	11%	15%	16%	21%	16%	15%	19%	12%	19%	16%
NEVER	9%	10%	8%	12%	5%	8%	13%	8%	6%	8%	9%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	4%	4%	2%	4%	4%	4%	3%	2%	5%	1%	4%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Would you say a two-year college education for your children/yourself is usually worth its price, sometimes worth its price, rarely worth its price, or never worth its price?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
USUALLY	50%	43%	51%	50%	57%	52%	49%	48%	47%	50%	50%
SOMETIMES	30%	33%	29%	30%	26%	28%	36%	31%	29%	28%	30%
RARELY	10%	13%	10%	11%	8%	10%	10%	10%	11%	8%	11%
NEVER	5%	6%	3%	6%	4%	5%	2%	4%	4%	6%	4%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	5%	5%	7%	4%	5%	5%	3%	7%	8%	7%	5%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Details may not add to totals due to rounding

EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
49%	61%	66%	54%	56%	66%	66%	58%	65%	67%	51%
27%	20%	26%	25%	28%	18%	24%	25%	16%	13%	41%
6%	8%	4%	6%	7%	8%	4%	6%	11%	8%	3%
8%	4%	1%	5%	4%	6%	4%	4%	5%	6%	3%
10%	7%	2%	10%	5%	2%	2%	7%	3%	6%	2%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
39%	40%	55%	39%	44%	52%	52%	49%	19%	39%	49%
48%	45%	38%	47%	45%	33%	42%	41%	58%	45%	39%
9%	12%	5%	10%	9%	13%	4%	7%	20%	15%	3%
4%	2%	2%	4%	2%	1%	1%	3%	3%	1%	3%
1%	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	8%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
38%	40%	51%	41%	40%	47%	49%	46%	34%	41%	33%
29%	28%	28%	26%	33%	26%	28%	28%	28%	29%	35%
16%	22%	10%	18%	17%	16%	12%	16%	17%	15%	17%
13%	7%	8%	10%	7%	9%	10%	8%	12%	11%	13%
4%	3%	4%	5%	3%	2%	2%	3%	10%	4%	2%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
46%	52%	53%	50%	52%	52%	50%	51%	41%	56%	52%
31%	28%	30%	29%	31%	27%	29%	30%	33%	26%	30%
10%	11%	10%	11%	10%	12%	10%	10%	17%	10%	7%
6%	4%	4%	5%	4%	4%	7%	4%	7%	4%	6%
8%	5%	3%	6%	4%	5%	5%	6%	3%	5%	5%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

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Would you say nursing home care for an elderly relative is usually worth its price, sometimes worth its price, rarely worth its price, or never worth its price?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
USUALLY	27%	31%	28%	23%	30%	30%	23%	24%	25%	28%	27%
SOMETIMES	32%	35%	31%	34%	28%	32%	31%	37%	29%	33%	32%
RARELY	16%	12%	15%	18%	16%	15%	14%	16%	18%	12%	16%
NEVER	10%	10%	11%	11%	8%	11%	11%	6%	11%	8%	10%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	15%	13%	16%	14%	18%	12%	22%	17%	17%	19%	15%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

How many times per week would you say you specifically discuss the cost of a college education for your children with your friends and family?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
TWICE A DAY OR MORE	3%	3%	1%	4%	5%	6%	4%	2%	4%	6%	3%
ONCE A DAY	3%	4%	2%	4%	3%	5%	2%	1%	7%	4%	3%
ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK	30%	32%	25%	32%	32%	30%	25%	31%	38%	36%	29%
RARELY	47%	41%	53%	46%	45%	38%	47%	52%	43%	38%	49%
NEVER	16%	20%	20%	13%	15%	20%	22%	14%	8%	15%	16%
NOT APPLICABLE	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

How much would you say you know about what it costs, on average, to attend college these days? Would you say you know...

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
A LOT	24%	31%	20%	25%	21%	26%	22%	17%	28%	42%	22%
A GOOD AMOUNT	32%	34%	30%	29%	35%	32%	30%	33%	33%	37%	31%
A LITTLE	30%	24%	34%	30%	32%	28%	34%	39%	23%	13%	31%
ALMOST NOTHING	14%	11%	15%	16%	12%	15%	14%	11%	18%	7%	15%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

How much do you personally feel you know about where and how to get financial aid for college? Would you say you know...

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
A LOT	13%	18%	9%	14%	13%	15%	12%	9%	13%	17%	13%
A GOOD AMOUNT	27%	23%	34%	24%	26%	26%	29%	28%	26%	28%	26%
A LITTLE	35%	36%	33%	34%	35%	33%	40%	36%	34%	30%	35%
ALMOST NOTHING	25%	23%	23%	27%	25%	26%	18%	27%	27%	23%	25%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	3%	1%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Details may not add to totals due to rounding

EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
31%	23%	29%	32%	26%	26%	31%	27%	27%	35%	31%
24%	32%	39%	31%	32%	37%	29%	34%	36%	16%	18%
16%	16%	14%	14%	20%	12%	14%	15%	17%	19%	8%
15%	10%	6%	13%	8%	7%	10%	9%	11%	18%	8%
14%	18%	12%	11%	14%	19%	17%	15%	9%	13%	36%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
3%	4%	2%	4%	3%	3%	5%	3%	6%	6%	3%
3%	3%	2%	5%	2%	4%	2%	3%	3%	1%	17%
28%	28%	33%	24%	32%	36%	32%	27%	42%	32%	37%
41%	49%	49%	42%	49%	43%	46%	51%	32%	38%	29%
23%	16%	12%	24%	15%	12%	13%	15%	18%	21%	14%
0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%
1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
11%	20%	40%	16%	23%	30%	34%	24%	30%	21%	25%
23%	34%	37%	30%	31%	33%	38%	31%	29%	29%	42%
37%	34%	19%	34%	31%	26%	22%	30%	27%	29%	27%
28%	11%	4%	20%	14%	12%	6%	14%	14%	20%	7%
0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
4%	13%	21%	12%	10%	18%	21%	14%	10%	15%	8%
15%	29%	32%	27%	30%	28%	19%	27%	32%	20%	23%
39%	35%	31%	34%	35%	37%	33%	33%	42%	39%	31%
40%	22%	16%	25%	25%	17%	27%	25%	16%	25%	36%
2%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	3%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

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Please tell me whether you agree with the following statement: A four-year college education is affordable for most Americans.

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
STRONGLY AGREE	11%	11%	8%	13%	11%	12%	9%	10%	11%	12%	11%
SOMEWHAT AGREE	16%	16%	19%	16%	12%	17%	17%	13%	14%	16%	16%
SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	31%	29%	31%	28%	37%	30%	37%	30%	29%	23%	32%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	40%	43%	39%	40%	40%	38%	38%	46%	42%	47%	39%
DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE	2%	1%	3%	3%	0%	2%	0%	2%	4%	2%	2%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

When it comes to higher education for your children, which of the following statements best describes how you feel:

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
A COLLEGE EDUCATION IS SO IMPORTANT THAT, REGARDLESS OF HOW MUCH IT MAY COST, I AM GOING TO MAKE SURE MY CHILDREN GO TO COLLEGE	58%	55%	58%	61%	54%	–	63%	56%	52%	–	58%
A COLLEGE EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT, BUT IF IT COSTS TOO MUCH I/MY FAMILY MAY HAVE TO RECONSIDER WHETHER I/WE SEND OUR CHILDREN TO COLLEGE	32%	30%	25%	35%	37%	–	28%	35%	36%	–	32%
A COLLEGE EDUCATION IS NOT THAT IMPORTANT, AND I DOUBT WHETHER I/MY CHILDREN WILL GO TO COLLEGE	3%	9%	3%	2%	2%	–	3%	3%	4%	–	4%
NOT APPLICABLE	2%	2%	1%	2%	3%	–	2%	2%	1%	–	2%
DON'T KNOW	4%	3%	10%	2%	3%	–	3%	5%	5%	–	4%
REFUSED	1%	2%	2%	0%	0%	–	1%	0%	1%	–	1%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**–**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**–**	**100%**

Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
10%	11%	13%	10%	11%	8%	14%	11%	7%	14%	17%
17%	11%	20%	13%	14%	18%	22%	18%	8%	8%	19%
31%	32%	29%	35%	32%	28%	32%	31%	30%	37%	31%
39%	44%	37%	40%	41%	45%	32%	39%	53%	42%	34%
3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	0%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
43%	61%	70%	47%	58%	57%	74%	56%	60%	63%	71%
47%	29%	20%	47%	32%	29%	17%	33%	33%	36%	18%
4%	3%	4%	3%	4%	5%	2%	4%	5%	0%	0%
0%	2%	3%	0%	2%	3%	3%	1%	1%	1%	7%
5%	4%	3%	3%	3%	6%	3%	5%	2%	0%	4%
1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

What do you think will be the greatest factor that will influence your family's decisions on which college your child/children will attend? (Respondents do not have children in college.)

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS	24%	23%	25%	24%	24%	–	23%	24%	27%	–	24%
TUITION/COST	28%	33%	22%	31%	26%	–	27%	28%	32%	–	28%
LOCATION	10%	3%	13%	11%	11%	–	9%	12%	8%	–	10%
FINANCIAL AID RECEIVED	5%	9%	2%	3%	9%	–	5%	5%	6%	–	5%
CO-ED/SINGLE SEX	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	–	0%	0%	1%	–	0%
COLLEGE VISIT EXPERIENCE	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	–	0%	0%	0%	–	0%
HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	–	0%	0%	0%	–	0%
RELIGIOUS SCHOOL	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%	–	1%	0%	1%	–	1%
PRESTIGE OF THE UNIVERSITY	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	–	2%	2%	2%	–	2%
WHERE THEY ARE ACCEPTED	3%	3%	2%	2%	5%	–	2%	4%	2%	–	3%
OPPORTUNITY FOR PERSONAL GROWTH	2%	3%	0%	3%	3%	–	3%	2%	2%	–	2%
CHILD'S CHOICE/ WHATEVER THEY CHOOSE	15%	12%	22%	14%	13%	–	17%	15%	13%	–	16%
NOT APPLICABLE	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	–	1%	1%	0%	–	1%
DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE	7%	6%	9%	8%	5%	–	8%	6%	6%	–	7%
REFUSED	1%	1%	4%	0%	1%	–	1%	1%	2%	–	1%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**–**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**–**	**100%**

What was the greatest factor that influenced your family's decision on which college your child/children would attend/your decision on which college you would attend? (Respondents have children in college.)

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS	22%	18%	25%	26%	19%	19%	13%	42%	22%	22%	–
TUITION/COST	17%	21%	15%	19%	14%	14%	0%	16%	28%	18%	–
LOCATION	15%	10%	23%	12%	16%	17%	13%	11%	16%	16%	–
FINANCIAL AID RECEIVED	7%	10%	3%	9%	5%	7%	13%	5%	6%	6%	–
COLLEGE VISIT EXPERIENCE	2%	5%	0%	2%	0%	2%	13%	0%	0%	1%	–
HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	–
RELIGIOUS SCHOOL	3%	3%	3%	2%	5%	3%	0%	5%	2%	2%	–
PRESTIGE OF THE UNIVERSITY	3%	3%	3%	2%	5%	4%	13%	0%	2%	4%	–
WHERE THEY ARE ACCEPTED	2%	3%	5%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	2%	2%	–
OPPORTUNITY FOR PERSONAL GROWTH	3%	3%	5%	2%	5%	1%	0%	0%	6%	3%	–
RELATIVE ATTENDED A PARTICULAR SCHOOL/ FAMILY HISTORY	1%	0%	3%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	–
CHILD'S CHOICE/ WHATEVER THEY CHOOSE	17%	18%	10%	21%	19%	20%	13%	21%	10%	18%	–
OTHER	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	–
NOT APPLICABLE	1%	3%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	–
DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE	5%	5%	5%	2%	11%	4%	25%	0%	6%	5%	–
REFUSED	1%	0%	3%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	–
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**–**

Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
20%	22%	31%	19%	23%	26%	35%	24%	23%	25%	41%
28%	32%	25%	37%	27%	31%	20%	27%	37%	21%	33%
9%	10%	10%	8%	12%	10%	12%	10%	8%	13%	7%
5%	4%	6%	4%	7%	6%	3%	5%	3%	7%	0%
0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
2%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%	1%	3%	1%	1%	4%
3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	1%	4%	3%	3%	0%	4%
1%	2%	3%	1%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%	4%	0%
15%	16%	15%	14%	18%	11%	14%	17%	12%	14%	7%
1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%
12%	7%	2%	10%	7%	3%	6%	6%	8%	14%	4%
2%	2%	0%	1%	0%	3%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
20%	16%	30%	17%	24%	15%	31%	24%	20%	11%	0%
12%	30%	9%	19%	17%	29%	12%	18%	24%	11%	20%
22%	16%	12%	19%	17%	12%	7%	15%	16%	22%	40%
2%	8%	8%	11%	2%	7%	2%	5%	20%	0%	0%
0%	2%	3%	0%	5%	0%	2%	2%	0%	0%	0%
0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%
5%	0%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	0%	0%	0%
2%	2%	5%	3%	2%	2%	5%	4%	0%	11%	0%
0%	2%	3%	0%	0%	2%	5%	2%	0%	0%	0%
0%	3%	5%	3%	0%	2%	7%	3%	0%	0%	20%
0%	2%	2%	3%	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
27%	11%	18%	19%	17%	17%	19%	18%	12%	11%	20%
2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%
2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%
5%	6%	5%	3%	10%	5%	2%	4%	4%	33%	0%
0%	2%	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

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What was the greatest factor that influenced your family's decision on which college your child/children would attend/your decision on which college you wou'd attend? (Respondents are enrolled in college themselves.)

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS	22%	26%	34%	13%	22%	25%	17%	11%	24%	26%	21%
TUITION/COST	18%	34%	13%	17%	13%	17%	17%	39%	12%	0%	20%
LOCATION	28%	11%	24%	34%	35%	26%	35%	17%	35%	26%	28%
FINANCIAL AID RECEIVED	1%	3%	0%	0%	4%	0%	4%	6%	0%	0%	2%
COLLEGE VISITATION EXPERIENCE	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY	3%	0%	0%	7%	0%	4%	0%	0%	6%	11%	2%
RELIGIOUS SCHOOL	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	6%	0%	0%	1%
PRESTIGE OF THE UNIVERSITY	6%	3%	8%	6%	6%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%
WHERE THEY ARE ACCEPTED	4%	8%	0%	6%	2%	3%	6%	0%	6%	5%	4%
OPPORTUNITY FOR PERSONAL GROWTH	3%	5%	0%	4%	4%	2%	2%	17%	6%	5%	4%
RELATIVE ATTENDED A PARTICULAR SCHOOL/ FAMILY HISTORY	3%	5%	11%	1%	0%	3%	6%	0%	0%	0%	4%
CHILD'S CHOICE/ WHATEVER THEY CHOOSE	4%	3%	3%	7%	2%	3%	8%	0%	6%	0%	5%
OTHER	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	5%	0%
DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE	4%	3%	8%	0%	7%	3%	4%	0%	6%	16%	2%
REFUSED	1%	0%	0%	2%	2%	2%	0%	6%	0%	5%	2%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Do you think most colleges try to keep the amount they charge at an affordable level for families like yours, or not?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
YES	37%	33%	43%	36%	36%	39%	33%	35%	36%	40%	37%
NO	55%	61%	49%	53%	57%	53%	60%	55%	53%	55%	55%
DON'T KNOW	8%	6%	9%	10%	7%	8%	7%	10%	10%	5%	9%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Do you think that most colleges are charging a fair price for a college education, or not?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
YES	34%	30%	38%	35%	34%	37%	31%	31%	35%	33%	34%
NO, PRICE TOO HIGH	57%	62%	54%	56%	56%	56%	61%	59%	54%	62%	57%
NO, PRICE TOO LOW	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	8%	7%	7%	8%	10%	7%	8%	10%	11%	6%	9%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

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Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
6%	25%	19%	20%	22%	26%	11%	26%	3%	26%	17%
35%	15%	22%	16%	18%	13%	37%	13%	31%	17%	35%
24%	32%	22%	23%	37%	37%	21%	29%	24%	35%	22%
0%	2%	2%	1%	2%	3%	0%	1%	0%	0%	4%
0%	2%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%	7%	0%	0%
0%	4%	2%	3%	0%	3%	11%	1%	17%	0%	0%
0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
6%	2%	11%	9%	6%	3%	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%
2%	11%	1%	6%	3%	16%	6%	3%	0%	0%	
6%	3%	5%	4%	2%	8%	0%	4%	0%	0%	13%
6%	3%	2%	5%	0%	0%	5%	4%	0%	9%	0%
0%	7%	0%	7%	0%	3%	0%	4%	10%	4%	0%
0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
12%	2%	3%	7%	2%	3%	0%	2%	0%	9%	9%
6%	1%	2%	3%	0%	0%	0%	2%	3%	0%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
33%	36%	42%	36%	37%	38%	38%	39%	28%	32%	38%
55%	55%	54%	55%	54%	54%	56%	53%	66%	64%	54%
12%	9%	5%	9%	9%	8%	6%	9%	7%	4%	8%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
30%	33%	39%	32%	34%	36%	41%	36%	27%	30%	29%
59%	57%	55%	60%	57%	57%	52%	55%	66%	62%	61%
1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%
10%	9%	7%	8%	9%	8%	6%	9%	6%	9%	9%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

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ACE SURVEY FINDINGS	REGION				CHILDREN UNDER 18				CHILDREN IN COLLEGE	

Why do you think colleges, in general, charge the prices they do?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
HIGH PRICED FACULTIES/ PROFESSORS	25%	27%	23%	24%	26%	26%	24%	20%	30%	29%	25%
FACULTY WHO ARE PAID FULL-TIME WAGES FOR PART-TIME WORK	3%	2%	4%	5%	1%	4%	2%	3%	1%	6%	3%
TOO MANY PROFESSORS GIVEN TENURE	2%	3%	0%	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%
TO OFFER STATE OF THE ART LIBRARIES, CLASSROOMS, AND STUDENT FACILITIES	1%	1%	2%	2%	0%	2%	0%	1%	2%	2%	1%
HIGH COST OF KEEPING PACE WITH TECHNOLOGY	2%	2%	3%	1%	4%	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%
RISING LEVELS OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%
TO MAINTAIN THE GROUNDS OF THE CAMPUS	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%	5%	4%	3%	2%	2%	4%
UPKEEP OF THE DORMITORIES	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
THEY KNOW THAT PARENTS HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE BUT TO PAY	10%	9%	12%	11%	9%	9%	13%	10%	13%	10%	10%
THEY KNOW THEY HAVE A MONOPOLY	4%	4%	3%	5%	4%	4%	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%
COMPLIANCE WITH GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS	1%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%	1%	3%	1%	1%	2%
CUTS IN GOVERNMENT FUNDING/SUPPORT	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
HIGH SALARIED ADMINISTRATORS	6%	8%	4%	5%	7%	8%	1%	6%	3%	6%	6%
IN ORDER TO KEEP CERTAIN PEOPLE FROM ATTENDING	2%	4%	2%	1%	0%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%
BAD/INEFFICIENT MANAGEMENT	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	0%	2%	2%
INAPPROPRIATE/POOR POLICIES	1%	1%	0%	1%	3%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%
OTHER	6%	5%	5%	9%	4%	6%	5%	11%	5%	4%	7%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	26%	26%	33%	23%	26%	23%	29%	30%	28%	26%	26%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

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Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
24%	25%	26%	23%	25%	28%	30%	27%	23%	16%	21%
2%	2%	5%	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	4%	4%	5%
2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	0%	2%
1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%
2%	2%	4%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	1%	4%	3%
1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	5%
4%	5%	4%	5%	4%	4%	3%	3%	10%	4%	8%
0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	
8%	11%	11%	8%	10%	15%	11%	10%	10%	12%	12%
3%	3%	6%	3%	3%	6%	6%	4%	4%	4%	0%
3%	3%	1%	2%	2%	5%	2%	4%	0%	3%	0%
1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%
7%	6%	6%	4%	6%	4%	6%	6%	4%	7%	2%
1%	3%	1%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	6%	2%
2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%
0%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	0%	2%
6%	9%	5%	7%	9%	5%	4%	7%	4%	4%	12%
36%	24%	19%	31%	25%	24%	18%	25%	28%	34%	21%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

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Which one of the following statements comes closest to the way you feel about the four-year colleges and universities in your state?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
THEY PROVIDE GOOD QUALITY COLLEGE INSTRUCTION AT A REASONABLE COST	25%	24%	24%	27%	24%	26%	24%	23%	25%	28%	25%
THEY PROVIDE COLLEGE INSTRUCTION AT A REASONABLE COST, BUT THE QUALITY IS NOT AS GOOD AS IT MIGHT BE	14%	17%	15%	11%	14%	15%	11%	12%	15%	18%	13%
THEY PROVIDE GOOD QUALITY COLLEGE INSTRUCTION, BUT THE COST IS HIGH	39%	43%	35%	42%	36%	37%	43%	49%	34%	33%	40%
THE COST OF THE COLLEGE INSTRUCTION THEY PROVIDE IS HIGH AND THE QUALITY IS NOT AS GOOD AS IT MIGHT BE	14%	11%	15%	12%	17%	14%	14%	8%	16%	12%	14%
DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE	8%	5%	12%	9%	7%	9%	6%	7%	10%	7%	8%
REFUSED	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	2%	1%	0%	2%	1%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Which one of the following statements comes closest to the way you feel about community colleges or junior colleges in your state?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
THEY PROVIDE GOOD QUALITY COLLEGE INSTRUCTION AT A REASONABLE COST	44%	42%	48%	42%	46%	43%	46%	44%	48%	52%	43%
THEY PROVIDE COLLEGE INSTRUCTION AT A REASONABLE COST, BUT THE QUALITY IS NOT AS GOOD AS IT MIGHT BE	24%	29%	18%	22%	26%	24%	25%	25%	17%	16%	24%
THEY PROVIDE GOOD QUALITY COLLEGE INSTRUCTION, BUT THE COST IS HIGH	15%	13%	11%	18%	17%	16%	14%	13%	19%	17%	15%
THE COST OF THE COLLEGE INSTRUCTION THEY PROVIDE IS HIGH AND THE QUALITY IS NOT AS GOOD AS IT MIGHT BE	6%	8%	6%	7%	3%	6%	6%	6%	5%	7%	6%
DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE	11%	7%	17%	11%	8%	11%	8%	12%	12%	7%	11%
REFUSED	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Details may not add to totals due to rounding

EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
19%	21%	34%	20%	26%	33%	26%	26%	27%	22%	15%
11%	15%	15%	14%	14%	12%	17%	15%	7%	6%	28%
39%	43%	35%	41%	41%	33%	39%	38%	48%	42%	33%
18%	13%	12%	15%	15%	13%	10%	13%	10%	21%	15%
12%	9%	5%	10%	5%	10%	8%	9%	8%	6%	8%
2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	3%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
36%	45%	50%	38%	49%	47%	45%	47%	32%	25%	48%
21%	21%	29%	22%	19%	26%	32%	21%	26%	41%	25%
21%	16%	9%	21%	16%	13%	8%	13%	26%	22%	15%
8%	7%	2%	7%	8%	3%	4%	6%	4%	10%	0%
13%	10%	10%	11%	9%	10%	10%	11%	13%	3%	12%
0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

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How likely do you think it is that you and your family will be able to pay for your children to attend a four-year public college or university?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
VERY LIKELY	39%	42%	32%	43%	37%	–	41%	35%	41%	56%	38%
SOMEWHAT LIKELY	46%	38%	55%	43%	48%	–	50%	43%	39%	32%	47%
SOMEWHAT UNLIKELY	11%	14%	8%	11%	11%	–	7%	13%	15%	6%	11%
VERY UNLIKELY	4%	6%	4%	3%	5%	–	1%	8%	6%	3%	4%
NOT APPLICABLE	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	–	1%	0%	0%	3%	0%
DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	–	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**–**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

How likely do you think it is that you and your family will be able to pay for your children to attend a private college or university?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
VERY LIKELY	32%	26%	31%	35%	34%	–	34%	31%	33%	35%	32%
SOMEWHAT LIKELY	38%	36%	43%	38%	34%	–	41%	39%	30%	33%	38%
SOMEWHAT UNLIKELY	17%	25%	14%	14%	19%	–	14%	17%	22%	15%	17%
VERY UNLIKELY	12%	12%	10%	13%	13%	–	11%	13%	12%	15%	12%
NOT APPLICABLE	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	–	0%	0%	1%	3%	0%
DON'T KNOW/NOT SURE	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	–	0%	0%	3%	0%	1%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**–**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Roughly, how much do you think it would cost per year for tuition ONLY to attend a two-year community college, junior college, or technical college today?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
MEAN	$4.206	$5.686	$4.239	$4.002	$3.144	$4.073	$4.529	$4.518	$3.927	$3.670	$4.270

And how much would it cost per year if you include tuition and all other costs associated with college, for example room and board, books, and other college fees?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
MEAN	$9.054	$11.000	$8.439	$8.871	$8.121	$8.932	$8.652	$10.350	$8.574	$8.280	$9.150

Roughly, how much do you think it would cost per year for tuition ONLY to attend a public college or university today?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
MEAN	$9.694	$11.662	$9.437	$9.079	$9.108	$9.434	$10.221	$10.205	$9.695	$8.609	$9.828

And how much would it cost per year if you include tuition and all other costs associated with college, for example, room and board, books, and other college fees?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
MEAN	$17.259	$19.641	$16.168	$16.607	$17.054	$16.887	$17.772	$18.139	$17.408	$15.202	$17.512

Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
25%	36%	52%	33%	23%	46%	72%	41%	30%	34%	46%
53%	45%	41%	46%	61%	39%	20%	42%	54%	51%	55%
15%	15%	3%	16%	13%	9%	5%	11%	11%	12%	0%
7%	3%	3%	5%	4%	6%	2%	4%	4%	2%	0%
0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
22%	30%	44%	23%	30%	29%	58%	28%	42%	26%	70%
43%	39%	32%	31%	42%	37%	34%	44%	18%	37%	15%
17%	20%	14%	27%	14%	22%	5%	14%	31%	26%	7%
17%	9%	10%	19%	14%	11%	3%	13%	9%	11%	7%
0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
$5,615	$3,904	$3,705	$4,551	$4,204	$4,178	$3,771	$4,151	$4,759	$4,399	$3,792

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
$11,090	$8,726	$ 8,329	$9,453	$9,075	$8,995	$8,909	$9,067	$10,255	$7,681	$8,649

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
$11,779	$9,740	$8,666	$10,044	$9,462	$9,529	$9,380	$9,296	$12,236	$9,013	11,614

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
$20,037	$16,711	$16,444	$16,612	$17,373	$17,108	$17,836	$17,011	$19,738	$16,343	17,421

Roughly, how much do you think it would cost per year for tuition ONLY to attend a private college or university today?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
MEAN	$17,897	$20,593	$16,105	$16,944	$18,176	$17,680	$17,764	$19,536	$17,196	$16,167	$18,107

And how much would it cost per year if you include tuition and all other costs associated with college, for example, room and board, books, and other college fees?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
MEAN	$28,532	$31,552	$26,044	$26,769	$30,137	$28,931	$28,046	$28,835	$26,366	$24,949	$28,972

The federal government has a responsibility to help people pay for a college education if they can't afford it.

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
STRONGLY AGREE	43%	47%	39%	47%	38%	45%	44%	41%	38%	38%	44%
SOMEWHAT AGREE	28%	28%	27%	27%	29%	26%	33%	30%	24%	26%	28%
SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	15%	14%	18%	13%	17%	14%	16%	16%	20%	18%	15%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	12%	11%	13%	12%	14%	14%	4%	12%	18%	15%	12%
DON'T KNOW	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

There is not enough financial aid available for all the qualified students who deserve the chance to get a college education.

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
STRONGLY AGREE	45%	49%	43%	42%	47%	45%	40%	49%	47%	51%	44%
SOMEWHAT AGREE	23%	19%	26%	25%	18%	21%	33%	20%	14%	17%	23%
SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	16%	19%	16%	16%	13%	16%	12%	17%	19%	15%	16%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	12%	10%	10%	12%	17%	13%	11%	9%	15%	14%	12%
DON'T KNOW	5%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	2%	5%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Federally sponsored work-study programs are a practical way for qualified students to pay part of the costs of a college education.

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
STRONGLY AGREE	56%	62%	54%	53%	56%	54%	54%	60%	59%	61%	55%
SOMEWHAT AGREE	32%	24%	35%	34%	30%	30%	40%	31%	29%	20%	33%
SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	5%	7%	4%	7%	4%	6%	4%	5%	5%	8%	5%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	4%	5%	3%	4%	4%	6%	1%	2%	3%	10%	3%
DON'T KNOW	4%	3%	4%	3%	7%	5%	2%	3%	4%	2%	4%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

State governments make a lot of financial aid available.

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
STRONGLY AGREE	20%	19%	16%	21%	21%	21%	19%	19%	15%	21%	19%
SOMEWHAT AGREE	30%	29%	33%	30%	27%	29%	33%	31%	27%	32%	30%
SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	17%	16%	20%	18%	15%	18%	18%	15%	15%	19%	17%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	17%	21%	18%	13%	18%	17%	12%	17%	23%	16%	17%
DON'T KNOW	16%	15%	13%	17%	20%	15%	17%	18%	20%	11%	17%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
$20,618	$17,317	$17,153	$17,391	$16,916	$17,667	$19,616	$17,213	$20,623	$19,581	20,442

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
$32,777	$27,252	$27,745	$28,092	$26,207	$28,483	$31,792	$28,161	$29,276	$30,316	30,652

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
46%	47%	37%	53%	45%	36%	29%	39%	66%	41%	59%
27%	29%	27%	29%	26%	29%	29%	28%	22%	33%	26%
12%	13%	20%	9%	17%	18%	24%	17%	5%	13%	10%
11%	10%	15%	9%	11%	16%	16%	14%	5%	13%	3%
3%	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	3%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
51%	45%	41%	48%	50%	45%	33%	43%	57%	44%	49%
21%	25%	21%	21%	23%	20%	23%	23%	17%	25%	15%
11%	16%	20%	14%	12%	20%	23%	16%	14%	16%	13%
11%	11%	14%	13%	11%	9%	16%	13%	9%	12%	8%
6%	4%	4%	4%	4%	6%	5%	5%	2%	3%	15%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
48%	59%	58%	61%	54%	56%	54%	55%	56%	66%	49%
35%	31%	30%	28%	34%	30%	32%	32%	32%	25%	31%
7%	4%	5%	5%	5%	4%	8%	5%	7%	5%	3%
4%	3%	4%	4%	3%	5%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%
6%	3%	4%	2%	5%	6%	2%	4%	3%	1%	15%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
24%	20%	15%	0%	18%	12%	14%	18%	24%	19%	31%
26%	31%	32%	27%	30%	36%	32%	29%	36%	30%	26%
15%	16%	21%	15%	17%	21%	21%	18%	22%	14%	10%
21%	16%	15%	18%	19%	14%	15%	17%	14%	25%	13%
14%	16%	18%	13%	16%	17%	17%	18%	5%	14%	21%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

When I think of college financial aid, I am mostly thinking of grants and scholarships, not student loans.

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
STRONGLY AGREE	39%	45%	35%	40%	33%	40%	36%	35%	44%	40%	39%
SOMEWHAT AGREE	23%	16%	25%	25%	24%	22%	30%	22%	21%	19%	24%
SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	19%	19%	19%	18%	19%	19%	18%	21%	15%	21%	18%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	16%	17%	16%	13%	18%	16%	14%	18%	16%	14%	16%
DON'T KNOW	4%	4%	3%	3%	5%	4%	2%	3%	4%	3%	4%
REFUSED	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The federal government makes a lot of financial aid available.

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
STRONGLY AGREE	30%	30%	25%	31%	32%	30%	30%	21%	39%	33%	29%
SOMEWHAT AGREE	38%	37%	45%	38%	32%	36%	38%	44%	37%	30%	38%
SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	17%	14%	12%	16%	25%	18%	14%	17%	14%	18%	16%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	12%	16%	15%	10%	11%	13%	13%	12%	7%	15%	12%
DON'T KNOW	4%	5%	3%	6%	1%	3%	5%	7%	3%	3%	4%
REFUSED	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

A lot of student aid is available to help families like mine afford a college education.

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
STRONGLY AGREE	27%	30%	22%	29%	26%	25%	28%	25%	35%	31%	27%
SOMEWHAT AGREE	32%	25%	42%	34%	27%	31%	35%	38%	30%	26%	33%
SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	18%	22%	15%	16%	22%	20%	15%	18%	16%	14%	19%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	18%	20%	15%	16%	22%	19%	17%	16%	15%	24%	17%
DON'T KNOW	4%	3%	7%	5%	3%	5%	5%	3%	3%	4%	4%
REFUSED	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

More expensive colleges and universities provide a better education than less expensive colleges and universities.

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
STRONGLY AGREE	15%	23%	13%	13%	13%	15%	17%	14%	14%	11%	16%
SOMEWHAT AGREE	20%	17%	22%	20%	19%	19%	15%	25%	21%	24%	19%
SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	32%	24%	34%	33%	37%	32%	34%	34%	30%	32%	32%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	29%	32%	25%	31%	26%	30%	28%	23%	33%	27%	29%
DON'T KNOW	5%	5%	6%	4%	5%	5%	6%	4%	3%	7%	4%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Student loans are a practical way for most families to pay part of the costs of a college education.

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
STRONGLY AGREE	49%	58%	42%	47%	49%	48%	47%	53%	51%	51%	49%
SOMEWHAT AGREE	35%	29%	44%	34%	32%	35%	38%	35%	31%	31%	35%
SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	8%	6%	6%	8%	11%	8%	9%	9%	7%	5%	8%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	6%	7%	6%	7%	6%	7%	5%	4%	6%	9%	6%
DON'T KNOW	2%	1%	1%	3%	2%	2%	1%	1%	6%	4%	2%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

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EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
37%	42%	37%	43%	39%	36%	31%	37%	44%	41%	49%
30%	22%	20%	21%	23%	24%	23%	24%	18%	28%	21%
15%	18%	23%	19%	17%	21%	25%	20%	16%	11%	13%
12%	15%	19%	13%	18%	17%	19%	15%	19%	15%	15%
6%	4%	1%	3%	3%	4%	2%	4%	4%	3%	3%
1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
27%	32%	30%	27%	32%	32%	23%	30%	26%	32%	25%
39%	33%	41%	39%	37%	38%	37%	38%	41%	33%	40%
16%	16%	18%	18%	18%	15%	18%	17%	14%	20%	13%
13%	15%	10%	14%	9%	13%	17%	11%	15%	15%	17%
5%	5%	3%	3%	4%	2%	6%	4%	4%	0%	5%
0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
27%	29%	26%	27%	30%	25%	23%	26%	31%	26%	33%
33%	29%	35%	33%	33%	32%	30%	35%	28%	20%	30%
18%	17%	20%	19%	17%	20%	17%	18%	19%	26%	17%
16%	20%	18%	17%	17%	18%	26%	18%	16%	25%	15%
7%	4%	2%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	6%	3%	5%
0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
18%	15%	13%	19%	16%	12%	14%	13%	26%	14%	20%
22%	20%	18%	22%	18%	23%	21%	19%	20%	27%	10%
29%	32%	36%	28%	33%	30%	35%	33%	27%	33%	35%
25%	30%	31%	28%	30%	31%	29%	29%	26%	25%	32%
7%	4%	3%	4%	4%	5%	2%	5%	2%	1%	3%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
48%	50%	48%	47%	50%	50%	58%	48%	54%	53%	43%
36%	33%	35%	37%	37%	31%	33%	36%	21%	28%	50%
7%	8%	8%	7%	9%	8%	5%	8%	7%	12%	3%
5%	6%	7%	7%	4%	10%	3%	5%	15%	8%	2%
4%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	0%	2%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

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ACE SURVEY FINDINGS	REGION				CHILDREN UNDER 18				CHILDREN IN COLLEGE	

Colleges and universities make a lot of financial aid available.

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
STRONGLY AGREE	24%	22%	23%	23%	28%	24%	24%	22%	24%	26%	24%
SOMEWHAT AGREE	41%	39%	48%	43%	33%	40%	40%	43%	46%	42%	41%
SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	15%	18%	11%	12%	20%	15%	19%	13%	10%	13%	15%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	11%	15%	8%	11%	8%	11%	11%	10%	12%	11%	11%
DON'T KNOW	10%	7%	9%	11%	11%	10%	7%	12%	8%	7%	10%
REFUSED	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

In general, do you think most colleges and universities make a profit?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
YES	80%	83%	79%	84%	74%	77%	89%	83%	80%	77%	81%
NO	15%	12%	16%	13%	21%	18%	10%	13%	15%	17%	15%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	5%	6%	5%	4%	6%	6%	1%	5%	5%	6%	5%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Suppose your child was accepted by a very good, expensive college—and also by an average, less expensive college. If the cost of going to the very good, expensive college meant that your family would have to make certain sacrifices—for example, taking out a second mortgage on your home, or not buying a new car, or not going away for vacation for a few years—which college do you think your child should attend?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
THE VERY GOOD, BUT EXPENSIVE COLLEGE	55%	57%	48%	57%	58%	54%	62%	54%	51%	55%	55%
THE AVERAGE BUT LESS EXPENSIVE COLLEGE	33%	30%	42%	30%	30%	33%	26%	32%	42%	36%	32%
DON'T KNOW/DEPENDS	12%	13%	10%	12%	11%	12%	11%	14%	8%	8%	12%
REFUSED	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	2%	0%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Suppose someone's child was accepted by a very good, expensive college—and also by an average, less expensive college. If the cost of going to the very good, expensive college meant that the family would have to make certain sacrifices—for example, taking out a second mortgage on their home, or not buying a new car, or not going away for vacation for a few years—which college do you think most families would send their children to?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
THE VERY GOOD SCHOOL	41%	47%	36%	40%	42%	40%	44%	45%	39%	35%	42%
THE AVERAGE SCHOOL	51%	45%	56%	52%	51%	53%	49%	45%	54%	57%	51%
DON'T KNOW/DEPENDS	7%	8%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	8%	6%	8%	7%
REFUSED	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

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EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
23%	28%	20%	23%	22%	24%	24%	23%	23%	33%	32%
39%	38%	46%	38%	49%	40%	37%	44%	34%	24%	40%
12%	15%	18%	18%	13%	14%	15%	14%	14%	21%	13%
11%	11%	10%	12%	9%	12%	10%	9%	25%	14%	10%
15%	9%	6%	9%	8%	10%	13%	10%	4%	9%	5%
0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
84%	85%	72%	84%	82%	80%	75%	79%	87%	92%	70%
10%	11%	24%	12%	15%	16%	23%	16%	10%	8%	23%
6%	4%	4%	5%	4%	4%	3%	5%	4%	1%	7%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
45%	52%	66%	51%	57%	57%	62%	55%	60%	50%	56%
40%	36%	24%	38%	29%	32%	30%	33%	34%	36%	28%
14%	12%	10%	10%	14%	11%	8%	12%	6%	11%	15%
2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	3%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
38%	40%	44%	36%	44%	42%	47%	40%	44%	46%	47%
56%	51%	48%	57%	52%	51%	40%	52%	51%	54%	47%
6%	8%	7%	7%	4%	6%	12%	8%	5%	0%	7%
0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

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Do you think that colleges and universities can cut the cost of tuition without lowering the quality of the education students receive?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
YES	77%	82%	78%	77%	74%	77%	81%	76%	77%	74%	78%
NO	16%	15%	15%	17%	18%	17%	14%	19%	15%	20%	16%
DON'T KNOW	6%	3%	7%	6%	8%	6%	5%	6%	9%	6%	6%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The average student pays less than $4,000 a year in tuition alone at a four-year college or university. (Scale: 1 means the statement makes respondents feel not at all better, 10 means it makes them feel a lot better.)

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
MEAN SCORE	6.6	6.4	6.8	6.8	6.5	6.5	6.5	7.0	6.8	6.5	6.6

Do you think it is true that the average student pays less than $4,000 a year in tuition alone at a four-year college or university?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
YES, TRUE	32%	22%	32%	38%	33%	32%	27%	31%	41%	37%	32%
NO, FALSE	60%	72%	58%	53%	62%	59%	67%	61%	54%	59%	60%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	8%	6%	10%	9%	6%	8%	6%	8%	5%	5%	8%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The average student pays about $10,000 a year in tuition plus all living expenses at a four-year college or university. (Scale: 1 means the statement makes respondents feel not at all better, 10 means it makes them feel a lot better.)

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
MEAN SCORE	5.9	6.0	6.1	5.9	5.8	6.0	5.9	6.3	5.6	5.6	6.0

Do you think it is true that the average student pays about $10,000 a year in tuition plus all living expenses at a four-year college or university?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
TRUE	67%	60%	73%	68%	67%	67%	65%	66%	75%	64%	68%
FALSE	26%	35%	20%	23%	29%	26%	30%	26%	19%	33%	26%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	7%	6%	6%	9%	5%	7%	5%	8%	7%	4%	7%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

There is $40 BILLION available from the federal government to help students and their families pay for college. (Scale: 1 means the statement makes respondents feel not at all better, 10 means it makes them feel a lot better.)

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
MEAN SCORE	7.2	7.0	7.0	7.4	7.3	7.0	7.7	7.2	7.7	7.2	7.2

Details may not add to totals due to rounding.

EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
79%	79%	75%	81%	77%	80%	70%	77%	82%	78%	79%
13%	15%	20%	15%	16%	16%	21%	17%	15%	16%	15%
8%	6%	5%	4%	6%	5%	9%	7%	3%	6%	6%
100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
6.6	6.7	6.5	6.7	6.5	7.0	6.3	6.7	6.3	6.8	5.0

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
33%	33%	31%	36%	32%	29%	30%	31%	43%	43%	27%
56%	59%	66%	55%	63%	64%	63%	60%	55%	54%	73%
11%	9%	3%	9%	5%	7%	7%	9%	2%	3%	0%
100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
5.9	5.8	6.1	5.9	5.9	6.0	6.2	6.0	6.0	5.9	5.5

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
58%	68%	75%	65%	69%	70%	67%	68%	66%	54%	77%
29%	27%	22%	27%	26%	25%	26%	25%	29%	39%	23%
13%	5%	3%	8%	5%	5%	7%	7%	5%	6%	0%
100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
7.0	7.4	7.2	7.5	7.2	7.1	6.9	7.2	7.7	7.8	6.2

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Do you think it is true that there is $40 BILLION available from the federal government to help students and their families pay for college?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
YES, TRUE	43%	41%	44%	43%	41%	43%	43%	39%	47%	41%	43%
NO, FALSE	38%	37%	33%	37%	43%	36%	44%	40%	34%	40%	38%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	20%	22%	23%	19%	16%	21%	14%	22%	19%	20%	20%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Research shows that college graduates make more money, are healthier, live longer, and are happier than those who do not go to college. (Scale: 1 means the statement makes respondents feel not at all better, 10 means it makes them feel a lot better.)

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
MEAN SCORE	7.1	6.9	7.2	7.2	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.3	7.0	7.6	7.1

Do you think it is true that research shows that college graduates make more money, are healthier, live longer, and are happier than those who do not go to college?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
YES, TRUE	56%	48%	56%	57%	61%	60%	52%	46%	57%	61%	55%
NO, FALSE	40%	46%	39%	39%	36%	36%	42%	51%	37%	31%	40%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	4%	6%	5%	4%	4%	4%	6%	4%	6%	8%	4%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Every college has trained financial aid counselors to help families figure out how to afford a college education. (Scale: 1 means the statement makes respondents feel not at all better, 10 means it makes them feel a lot better.)

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
MEAN SCORE	7.4	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.7	7.2	7.8	7.5	7.6	7.0	7.4

Do you think it is true that every college has trained financial aid counselors to help families figure out how to afford a college education?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
TRUE	78%	75%	85%	76%	77%	76%	81%	78%	80%	86%	77%
FALSE	16%	19%	10%	17%	18%	17%	15%	16%	14%	11%	17%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	6%	6%	6%	7%	5%	7%	4%	6%	6%	4%	6%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

What is your age?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
Under 30	3%	2%	3%	3%	2%	4%	0%	0%	0%	4%	2%
30 TO 39 YEARS OLD	12%	13%	10%	11%	14%	20%	1%	1%	4%	12%	12%
40 TO 49 YEARS OLD	15%	15%	17%	14%	14%	20%	2%	4%	22%	42%	12%
50 TO 59 YEARS OLD	22%	21%	22%	21%	22%	12%	14%	40%	54%	30%	21%
60 TO 69 YEARS OLD	28%	29%	29%	28%	26%	19%	48%	49%	19%	6%	31%
70 OR OLDER	21%	19%	18%	23%	22%	25%	35%	5%	0%	6%	23%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Details may not add to totals due to rounding

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EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
39%	45%	44%	40%	45%	43%	42%	43%	41%	36%	50%
40%	34%	39%	42%	34%	40%	38%	36%	41%	49%	37%
21%	22%	17%	19%	21%	17%	20%	21%	18%	15%	13%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
6.4	7.1	7.8	7.0	6.9	7.3	7.9	7.3	6.4	6.9	6.7

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
42%	51%	74%	48%	56%	60%	71%	58%	47%	46%	61%
52%	44%	24%	50%	39%	36%	25%	37%	51%	49%	39%
6%	5%	2%	3%	5%	5%	4%	5%	2%	5%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
7.4	7.6	7.2	7.6	7.4	7.2	7.0	7.4	7.3	7.8	6.8

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
78%	80%	76%	0%	82%	81%	73%	79%	73%	71%	80%
14%	14%	20%	16%	14%	15%	20%	14%	23%	28%	15%
8%	6%	4%	7%	4%	5%	7%	7%	3%	1%	5%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
4%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	4%	1%	1%
15%	10%	11%	12%	10%	9%	11%	14%	10%	5%	2%
17%	13%	15%	12%	12%	22%	19%	17%	12%	4%	5%
18%	22%	24%	17%	21%	27%	28%	22%	18%	23%	18%
27%	26%	32%	26%	32%	29%	29%	27%	31%	33%	37%
18%	27%	17%	31%	22%	12%	11%	18%	25%	33%	37%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

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ACE SURVEY FINDINGS	REGION				CHILDREN UNDER 18				CHILDREN IN COLLEGE	

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
NO COLLEGE EXPERIENCE	30%	28%	34%	34%	19%	28%	29%	36%	27%	23%	30%
SOME COLLEGE	35%	31%	32%	35%	40%	35%	38%	33%	34%	38%	34%
COLLEGE GRADUATE	36%	41%	34%	31%	40%	37%	34%	31%	39%	39%	35%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

What is your marital status?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
MARRIED	57%	52%	62%	59%	54%	46%	73%	71%	71%	73%	56%
DIVORCED	9%	7%	9%	9%	12%	9%	6%	12%	16%	11%	9%
SEPARATED	2%	3%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	4%	3%	3%	2%
WIDOWED	4%	5%	4%	3%	3%	6%	0%	1%	2%	2%	4%
SINGLE, NEVER MARRIED	28%	33%	24%	26%	30%	39%	18%	13%	8%	12%	29%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Do you live in a single-parent or in a dual-parent household?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
SINGLE PARENT	26%	28%	24%	26%	24%	0%	21%	27%	30%	29%	25%
TWO PARENT	74%	70%	75%	74%	75%	100%	77%	73%	69%	71%	74%
REFUSED/DON'T KNOW	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	1%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Are you intending to send more than one child to college?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
YES	71%	72%	67%	72%	71%	0%	71%	74%	65%	90%	69%
NO	25%	23%	27%	25%	24%	100%	21%	23%	32%	9%	27%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	5%	5%	6%	3%	5%	0%	7%	3%	3%	1%	5%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

When you were in college did you receive financial aid, that is, grants, scholarships, work-study or loans to help defray the costs of college? (Asked only of college graduates.)

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
YES	59%	64%	62%	58%	53%	57%	66%	63%	52%	52%	60%
NO	41%	35%	38%	42%	47%	43%	34%	36%	48%	48%	40%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Does your child receive financial aid, that is, grants, scholarships, work-study or loans to help defray the costs of college? (Asked only of those with children in college.)

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
YES	58%	61%	63%	53%	56%	52%	36%	68%	68%	58%	–
NO	41%	39%	37%	46%	40%	45%	64%	32%	32%	41%	–
DON'T KNOW	2%	0%	0%	2%	5%	3%	0%	0%	0%	2%	–
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	–

Details may not add to totals due to rounding

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EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
–	–	–	43%	29%	17%	16%	29%	34%	39%	20%
–	–	–	38%	40%	34%	19%	33%	41%	41%	37%
–	–	–	20%	31%	49%	65%	38%	26%	20%	43%
–	–	–	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
59%	54%	59%	33%	60%	74%	76%	60%	46%	54%	41%
9%	9%	10%	14%	11%	6%	4%	11%	6%	5%	6%
2%	2%	1%	4%	1%	0%	2%	1%	6%	3%	1%
7%	3%	2%	6%	3%	2%	1%	4%	6%	1%	1%
23%	32%	28%	43%	25%	17%	17%	24%	36%	37%	51%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
26%	29%	21%	48%	25%	13%	10%	22%	33%	38%	33%
73%	71%	78%	51%	73%	87%	90%	77%	67%	58%	67%
1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	4%	0%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
67%	71%	74%	62%	74%	72%	81%	69%	73%	73%	84%
27%	25%	22%	31%	23%	23%	17%	27%	24%	20%	13%
6%	4%	3%	7%	3%	5%	2%	4%	3%	8%	3%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
–	–	59%	66%	65%	61%	50%	58%	77%	56%	54%
–	–	41%	34%	35%	39%	49%	42%	24%	44%	44%
–	–	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%
–	–	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
55%	57%	62%	56%	71%	53%	52%	61%	61%	46%	29%
43%	42%	38%	38%	30%	47%	48%	39%	36%	55%	43%
2%	1%	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	29%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Into which of the following categories does your total annual household income fall?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
LESS THAN $30,000	32%	32%	32%	35%	28%	35%	32%	29%	25%	25%	33%
$30,000 TO $49,999	34%	32%	33%	34%	35%	32%	37%	36%	34%	25%	34%
$50,000 TO $74,999	19%	19%	22%	17%	19%	19%	17%	20%	22%	26%	18%
$75,000 OR MORE	15%	18%	13%	14%	17%	15%	14%	15%	20%	24%	14%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

What is your main racial or ethnic background?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
WHITE	77%	77%	88%	74%	71%	81%	67%	73%	78%	76%	77%
AFRICAN AMERICAN	10%	13%	7%	15%	4%	8%	12%	15%	12%	15%	10%
HISPANIC	8%	7%	3%	7%	16%	6%	15%	7%	7%	6%	8%
OTHER	5%	3%	3%	4%	10%	5%	6%	5%	4%	4%	5%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Gender

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
MALE	48%	47%	49%	48%	48%	51%	44%	44%	44%	48%	48%
FEMALE	52%	53%	51%	52%	53%	49%	56%	56%	56%	52%	52%
	100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Region

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	No Children Under 18	Newborn to 5 Years Old	6 to 11 Years Old	12 to 17 Years Old	Yes	No
NORTHEAST	20%	–	–	–	–	22%	20%	16%	16%	21%	20%
MIDWEST	22%	–	–	–	–	22%	21%	25%	24%	22%	22%
SOUTH	35%	–	–	–	–	34%	35%	41%	35%	35%	35%
WEST	23%	–	–	–	–	23%	24%	19%	25%	22%	23%
	100%	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Details may not add to totals due to rounding

EDUCATION			INCOME				RACE/ETHNICITY			
No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
47%	35%	18%	–	–	–	–	29%	46%	43%	28%
34%	38%	29%	–	–	–	–	34%	30%	34%	38%
11%	19%	26%	–	–	–	–	20%	17%	13%	13%
8%	9%	28%	–	–	–	–	17%	7%	10%	21%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	–	–	–	–	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
74%	74%	82%	70%	77%	82%	83%	–	–	–	–
12%	12%	7%	15%	9%	9%	4%	–	–	–	–
11%	9%	5%	11%	9%	6%	6%	–	–	–	–
3%	5%	6%	4%	6%	4%	7%	–	–	–	–
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	–	–	–	–

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
49%	41%	54%	45%	46%	53%	57%	49%	39%	47%	54%
51%	59%	47%	55%	54%	47%	43%	51%	61%	54%	47%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

No College Experience	Some College	College Graduate	Less than $30,000	$30,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more	White	African American	Hispanic	Other
19%	18%	23%	20%	19%	20%	24%	20%	25%	18%	12%
26%	20%	21%	22%	21%	26%	18%	26%	15%	7%	12%
41%	36%	31%	38%	35%	31%	32%	34%	52%	31%	32%
15%	26%	25%	20%	24%	24%	26%	21%	9%	45%	44%
100%	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

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